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Uncle Zeb and His Friends

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But best of all were the stories the old man told.

UNCLE·ZEB·& HIS·FRIENDS

BY·EDWARD W. FRENTZ

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY
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To the Perry Mason Company, publishers of the *Youth's Companion*, in which all of these stories first appeared, the author owes and hereby expresses his gratitude for the generous permission to reprint them here.

To the spirit of childhood, the most beautiful thing in the world, these little stories are reverently dedicated

Uncle Zeb's cabin stood at the end of a short lane that ran up from the "back road" toward the mountain. Two great poplars shaded its mossy roof, and their silver leaves shook and shimmered in the sunlight, no matter how still the day was. Boys and girls had often sat on the old bench by the door, and looked up into the great trees in the hope of finding the leaves motionless; but there had never been a time when they were not moving, as if unseen fingers were tickling them and they were trying to get away.

Behind the cabin was a little garden-patch, where the old man raised most of the things he needed to eat during the winter; and in one corner of the lot stood the shop, a treasure-house of things that the old man made. There were beautiful canes, and strange windmills, and graceful canoes, and dainty boxes of birch-bark, and other things from woods and fields that delight the heart of a boy who loves the out-of-doors and who likes to make things.

But best of all were the stories that the old man told as he worked. Some were stories about girls, and some were about boys, and there were many that had to do with animals. No one of the children had ever heard all of them, but an old friend of Uncle Zeb's knew them all, and after a time set them down in a book; and this is the book.

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Uncle Zeb and His Friends

UNCLE ZEB AND HIS FRIENDS

The Outstretched Hand

THERE was no answer when Johnnie knocked at Uncle Zeb's cabin door; and so, after waiting a few minutes, he went round the corner and along the path to the shop. There he heard someone pounding, and through the open door caught sight of the old man working at his bench.

"Ah!" said Uncle Zeb. "So you have come again to see the old man work!"

He brushed the shavings from the top of a stool, and Johnnie sat down.

To make sure that he should not touch the old man's tools or handle the other things on the bench without permission, Johnnie put his hands in his pockets. As he did so, he felt something hard, and drew it out. It was a roll of large lozenges that he had forgotten; but now he took it out and was going to put one of the lozenges into his mouth, when he happened to think that it would be most impolite to eat his candy without offering some to Uncle Zeb.

The old man smiled at him through his big glasses, and took some. When he had tasted it a little while, he said, "Do you know where it grows?"

"Where what grows?" asked Johnnie.

"This candy," said the old man.

"Why, candy does n't grow; you have to buy it at the store — unless somebody gives it to you," said Johnnie.

"Yes, but *I* know where this kind grows. It comes from a bush or little tree — a most curious tree. How would you like to go with me to look for it along the foot of the mountain?"

"That would be great!" cried Johnnie. And in a few minutes the shop was locked, and the old man and the boy were climbing the rocky path behind the garden patch.

"What does it look like — this bush that the candy grows on?" asked Johnnie, after they had gone a little way.

"Well," said Uncle Zeb, "it is different from any other bush or tree in the woods. When it is young, the bark is smooth and very green — as green as grass; but when it grows older, it begins to turn brown, and gets full of wrinkles, just as people do." And he laughed until his own brown, wrinkled face looked like a good-natured baked apple.

"But that is not the strangest thing about it," he went on. "The strangest thing is that the leaves are like little hands stretched out to beckon to you. On most trees and bushes the leaves are all of one kind; but on this bush you will find three kinds, and every one will be a little bright green mitten. Some of the mittens will have one thumb, as all mittens should have, and some

will have no thumb, and some will have two thumbs, one on each side. Now look sharp.

For a little while longer they went on; then Johnnie caught sight of a green stem running up into a roof of large, glossy green leaves. He looked closer, and there among the leaves was one shaped exactly like a mitten, with the thumb in just the right place, and another with the thumb on the left-hand side; and then he saw that they were all mittens, as the old man had said, some with two thumbs, some with one thumb, and some with no thumb at all.

"I've found it, Uncle Zeb!" he cried.

The old man came back, smiling. "Why, sure enough! You've hit it right the first time, just as slick as a real woodsman could do."

But Johnnie was not smiling. Instead, he was looking the bush all over, lifting the bunches of leaves and feeling the under sides of them. "I thought you said the candy grew on it," he said, in a disappointed tone.

The old man laughed again. "Nature does n't put her candy in the show-case," he chuckled. "She puts it where it will keep better, and where it will always be fresh. She makes you hunt for it. Now you take hold with me and pull hard, and we'll see what we find."

Shoulder to shoulder with the old man, Johnnie took hold of the bush, and both of them pulled. Little by little it started. The earth began to rise in a long ridge. Plop! plop! plop! The little downward-running roots gave way, and then suddenly a long, snake-like root

that lay just below the top of the ground broke out, and both Johnnie and Uncle Zeb went over on their backs.

"Now," said the old man, "we will go down to the brook."

He took the long root with him, and when they had carefully washed it in the clear running water, he passed it to Johnnie.

"Taste it," he said.

Johnnie bit out a piece of the bark — white, tender, and juicy. "O-o-o, goody!" he cried. "It's just what you said — it tastes just the same as the candy!"

"Yes, only better," added Uncle Zeb, "for it isn't so sweet, and it has the flavor of the woods, where all sorts of good things are stored up for us if we know where to look for them. And besides, you earned it yourself."

The Tinker's Willow

ONE day, when my Grandfather Gifford was about seven years old, he looked across the road to his father's blacksmith shop, and seeing someone sitting on the bench by the door, went over to find out who it was.

He found a little old man, with thick, bushy eyebrows and bright blue eyes. His clothes were made all of leather, which creaked and rattled when he moved. By his side was a partly open pack, in which grandfather could see curious tools and sheets of shiny tin. By that he knew that the man was the traveling tinker, who came once or twice a year to mend leaky pans and pails, and of whom he had heard his mother speak.

The old man was eating his luncheon — a slice or two of bread, a bit of cold meat, and a cold potato; and because it seemed so poor a luncheon, grandfather went back to the house and brought two big apples from the cellar. The old man thanked him and ate the apples. Then he got up, brushed the bread-crumbs from his leather breeches, and taking a little tin dipper from his pack, went down to the brook for a drink of water. When he had had his fill, he came back to the bench and sat down.

"Now, my boy," he said, "we will make a tree grow here by the brook. There should be one, for shade."

"Make a tree!" cried grandfather. "How can we make a tree? I thought only God made trees."

"True," said the old man. "Only God makes trees, but sometimes we can help Him."

With that, he took from the bench at his side a stick that he had cut somewhere by the road, and had been using for a cane. It was slender and straight, and grandfather noticed that the bark was smooth and of a beautiful light green.

"Of this," said the old man, "we will make a tree in which the birds of the air shall build their nests, and under which the beasts of the field shall find shelter and rest in the heat of the day. But first there shall be music, to please the spirits of the springtime. Take this stick down to the brook, and wet it all over."

So my grandfather took the stick and did as the old man told him. When he came back to the bench, the tinker had a large horn-handled knife open in his hand. With the blade, which seemed very sharp, he made a single cut through the bark of the stick, about a foot from one end, and by holding the knife still, and spinning the stick slowly toward him in his fingers, he carried the cut all the way round. Then, near the end, he cut a deep notch, and four or five smaller notches in a line farther down; and after that he laid the stick across his knee, and turning it all the while, began to pound it gently with the handle of the knife.

When he had pounded a long time, he laid down the knife, and taking the stick in both hands, gave it a little

twist. At that, grandfather heard something pop, and saw the bark slip from the end of the stick above the knife-cut, all whole except for the notches: a smooth, green tube.

Of the part of the stick from which he had slipped the bark, the old man cut away more than half, and across the upper end he made a smooth, slanting cut. Then he bade grandfather wet the stick again, and when he had done it, he slipped the bark back to its place, and put the end of the stick in his mouth and began to blow; and out of the holes he had cut, which he stopped, one after another, with his fingers, came what grandfather said was the sweetest music he had ever heard — music like the voice of a bird singing a long way off, or like that of a tiny bell.

As the old man played, he seemed to forget all about grandfather; but by and by he laid down the whistle, and smiled and said, "Come. Now we will make the tree."

And together the old man and the boy walked down to the brook, and crossed over on some stepping-stones, to a place where the ground was soft and black and wet; and there, while the boy held the stick straight, the old man pushed it far down into the mud until it stood firm and true, with the whistle at the upper end of it. And the old man took off his hat, and bowing to the stick, seemed to my grandfather to make a speech to it.

"Little brother," he said, "we leave you here, where you will never be hungry or thirsty. You have made

your little music for us to-day, but when you have grown tall and strong, One who is greater than I shall play upon you with the breath of his mighty winds; and when this little boy is older than I am now," — here he put his hand on my grandfather's head, — "his children's children shall hear your music and be glad."

In a little while after that, the old man put on his pack and went away; but my grandfather could not forget him, and almost every day he looked at the stick by the brook. The whistle at the top began to wither and dry up, and the loose bark cracked open and fell away, until it seemed as if the whole stick must be dead. But one day my grandfather saw that a tiny bud had appeared below where the whistle had been; and the bud became a little sprout, and the sprout a shoot, and other shoots followed, until the stick was indeed a little tree.

Through all the years that came after, it grew taller and stronger, until "The Tinker's Willow" was known as the greatest tree in all the countryside, and the birds did, indeed, build their nests among its branches, and the cattle lay in its shade in the hot noontide.

Even when my grandfather was an old, old man, and had grown-up sons and daughters and many grandchildren, he loved to sit on the bench by the shop and listen to the voice of the wind among the leaves of the great tree; and then, if we asked him, he would tell us again of the tinker who planted it, and of the music that came from the stick out of which it grew.

Bob

EARLY one morning Mark Lewis was awakened by a low whining under his window. Mark was spending the summer on his grandfather's farm, and his bedroom, being in the ell of the house, was just above the side door.

Mark crawled quickly out of bed and ran to the open window. The big, flat door-stone was just beneath him, and on the stone sat a puppy.

The dog was brown and white, with a coat of long, thick hair that would have been pretty if it had not been wet and muddy, full of snarls and tangled with burs.

The little fellow was so thin that anyone could count all his ribs. He was shivering, too, for the early morning air was sharp.

The dog, hearing the slight noise that Mark made when he went to the window, looked up at him with a pair of soft brown eyes that seemed to say, "Please give me something to eat. I am a poor dog that has no home and is out of work!"

Mark hurried down, and opened the door. The little dog came in, whimpering, and wiggling all over. In a minute his little pink tongue was lapping a dish of milk, and it kept on until the last drop was gone.

It took a good deal of teasing on the part of Mark and his cousins, Fred and Charlie, to get permission to keep

the puppy; but at last grandfather and grandmother said yes, and all three of the boys were very happy. They gave the dog the name of Bob, and began at once to teach him to mind and to do tricks.

One day, when they had had him about a week, they were playing with him in front of the house. Mark had an apple that he would throw for Bob to chase; but they thought it was better fun sometimes not to throw the apple, but only to make the motion. Poor Bob would see Mark's arm move, and away he would dash, without stopping to see whether the apple went or not; and then he would look so puzzled that you could not help laughing at him.

While they were playing in that way, the doctor drove along and stopped to see what the boys were doing. When he had watched them a moment, he called them up to his carriage, and said, "Boys, I am sorry to see that you are lying to your dog."

"Why, sir, what do you mean?" asked Fred. "We have n't said anything to him, and he could n't understand it if we did."

"Yes," said the doctor, "but people sometimes tell lies by what they do as well as by what they say. Your little dog has only a small dog's mind. He cannot think things out for himself, as you can. When you make a motion as if to throw the apple, he trusts you: he thinks you mean to throw it; and when you hold the apple back, you really tell him a lie. By and by he will learn that he cannot trust you, and then he will not do what you tell him to. You ought never to lie to a dog."

That seemed funny to the boys at first, but they all liked the doctor, and so they stopped fooling Bob. In time he became so well trained that he would do anything his young masters told him to do, if only he understood what they meant.

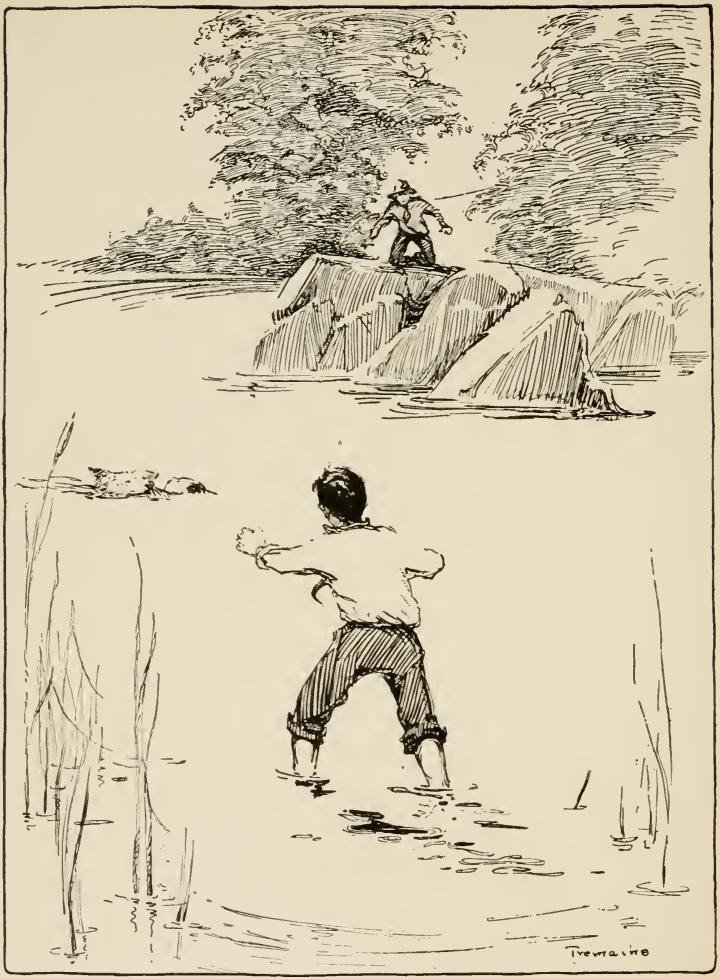
Best of all, he liked to bring things out of the water; and he had learned that he could trust his young friends so surely that, if one of them only made a motion toward the water, in Bob would go, certain that he would find there something that must be brought to land.

One afternoon near the end of the long vacation the boys went down to the shore of the pond to play. While Mark and Fred were watching a turtle, little Charlie went over to a big rock that reached out into deep water. All at once there was a splash and a scream, and Charlie was gone. He had slipped from the rock.

The other boys ran, crying, toward him, and Mark lay down on his stomach, to reach out as far as he could; but Charlie was nowhere to be seen. In their fear both boys screamed at the top of their voices. A second later Bob came tearing out of the bushes, barking as if he knew something was wrong, and was trying to say, "What's the matter? What do you want me to do?"

Both boys had the same thought at the same time. Bob could do what they could not. Each made the motion of throwing something into the water, and each cried, "In, Bob, in! Go fetch it!"

With a great splash Bob leaped clear of the rock and began to swim in a circle. He had not made even one



The dog did not have to be told what to do. . . . In half a minute he had the boy in shallow water.

turn when Charlie's head came up close at hand. The dog did not have to be told what to do. He knew that he was there to get something, so he fastened his teeth in Charlie's coat-collar, and in half a minute had him in shallow water, where the boys could drag him out.

That evening, when the doctor had come down from Charlie's room, and had said that he would be all right in the morning, and the boys had told him again how quickly and how well Bob had acted, the doctor patted the dog's curly head tenderly, and turning to Mark, said, "Now do you see, my boy, why I told you never to lie to a dog."

The Pirate of the Pond Hole

THE brook on the Alden farm comes dancing and singing along through the woods; it strolls out into the pasture, wriggles under the road through a dark, rock-bound hole, and then, as if tired and in search of rest, it stretches itself out in the duck pond. Tall willows in soft green dresses fan it all day, and cat-o'-nine-tails whisper little secrets to it.

To Lawrence Alden the brook and pond are friends and playmates, always ready to amuse him, or tell him something that he did not know before; and so he has spent much time with them.

On the still water of the pond there swam a flock of twenty little mandarin ducks, all his own. Their mother was always with them, sailing from one little cove to another, like a ship in a fleet of boats, calling them back to her side when they got too far away, as the ship calls in its boats when the sea grows rough. Lawrence knew that the mother duck would look after her little flock faithfully, but there were some dangers from which she could not protect them. Once, when he was lying by the shore, an evil-looking crow had sailed over, close to the surface of the water. The old duck had called the young ones to her with a great quacking, and had thrashed the water so hard with her wings that the crow had passed; but he alighted on a fence-post near by, and sat

there, scolding and muttering to himself, till Lawrence drove him away.

Another time, as Lawrence was watching some polly-wogs, a slim brown body slipped silently out from between two rocks in the bank, dived into the pool, and came up with a small fish. Then, seeing Lawrence move a little, it glared at him with a beady black eye, and hissed like an angry cat. A mink! It would go hard with the little ducks if a mink ever got among them!

For a week Lawrence counted the ducks every night, and found the number right. Then, one evening, there were only nineteen, nor could he find the missing one anywhere. The next night two more were gone, and the day after that, still another. The old duck seemed frightened. She kept her flock close beside her, and stayed with them near the shore.

Most of the day now, Lawrence watched from his place under the willows, but neither the crow nor the mink came back. Then just before noon one day, there was a great fluttering, and with a terrified "Quack!" one of the little ducks went out of sight before his very eyes. He saw nothing touch it; it seemed to be dragged under the water and never came up again. Only a widening circle of ripples remained to show the spot.

At the barn Lawrence found Henry, his father's hired man, and told him what he had seen.

"Aha!" said Henry. "I guess I know the old boy that is doing the mischief. We must get him, or you will not have a duck left. I'll help you after dinner."

When the meal was over, Henry went up to his room, and came back with a large fish-hook. To the shank of it he fastened a stout piece of copper wire about a foot long, with a loop in the end; and through the loop he passed a strong cord. From the cellar he brought up an empty two-gallon jug, which he corked tight, and to the handle of which he tied the other end of the cord that held the hook.

"Now," he said to Lawrence, "get me a piece of meat with some fat and some tough gristle on it."

When Lawrence brought it, Henry pushed it on the hook; and taking the things with them, the two started for the shore.

Lawrence pointed out the place where the little duck had gone down. "It's about ten feet deep there," said Henry, and he shortened the cord on the jug till the hook was only seven or eight feet from the handle. Then, once more making sure that the cork was tight, he pushed the jug slowly out from the shore into the deeper water of the pond, and threw the baited hook beyond it.

"Now," he said, "I must go back to my work. Sit still, watch the jug, and see what happens."

For an hour nothing happened, except that the jug, turning first this way and then that, and bowing gravely to all the shores as the gentle wind moved it, drifted slowly away. Then suddenly it gave a jump and went over on its side, and at length passed out of sight under water. But in a moment it appeared once more,

dancing and whirling in the liveliest way; then it began to move rapidly out from the shore.

Lawrence started on the run for Henry. When the two got back to the shore, the jug was gone; but they took the boat and pushed out, and soon found the jug among the cat-o'-nine-tails. Henry reached down into the water and began to pull. The cord jerked this way and that, but steadily came in, till there rose by the boat a great black head like a snake's, but with a beak like a hawk's, and angry yellow eyes. Then a broad back appeared, and two wildly pawing flippers. It was a great mud-turtle, the enemy of all water-birds. Across his shell from back to front he measured more than eighteen inches, and later they found that he weighed nearly twenty pounds. From his dark hole in the mud he had risen silently to the surface, and catching the little ducks by the legs, had dragged them down.

"But why," asked Lawrence, "did you put the jug on the line?"

"Because," said Henry, "if I had tied the cord to a stake or the tree, he might have broken loose. The jug he could n't hold down long, for it was full of air, and so it kept pulling him up till he was tired out."

The Runaway Duck

IN the centre of the big city park is a beautiful little pond, and in the pond is an island, and on the island stands a curious little house.

There are no windows, but only two long rows of doors: one on the ground, the other reached, not by flights of stairs, but by boards sloping gently up to the second story and down almost to the water's edge.

Above the little house bend the long, graceful branches of willow trees, of a lovely light green; and in front of it, on the beach of sand and gravel, the waves are always laughing.

Those who live in this house wear nothing but snow-white clothing, with yellow stockings and shoes, for they are a great family of ducks that belong to the city.

One fine morning a baby duck came to the door of one of the upper rooms in the little house. He stood there a while, looking up and down the shore. It seemed too good a day to stay in, so the little duck waddled slowly down the sloping board-walk, dipped his bill into the water to see if it was warm, and then started to swim away.

He had gone nearly to the end of the island, and was having a happy time, when out from behind a big bush swam an old drake, or grandfather duck, big and strong, and very cross.

Out of one of the lower doors of the house a big gray rat was creeping.

The little duck was, of course, much frightened. He tried to turn round and swim back; but he just pounded the water with his feet and beat it with his small wings, without going ahead any.

The big drake swam right up to him and gave him a hard thump with his bill, which drove his head clear under water, so that he got his mouth full, and almost choked. The big drake followed him and kept rapping him with his bill. Not until he was almost back to the little house did the old drake leave him. Then he went away, quacking crossly.

The little duck crawled out of the water and lay on his side on the warm sand, trying to get his breath, too tired to move or even to stand.

Just then he saw something that filled him with terror. Out of one of the lower doors in the house a big gray rat was creeping. His tiny black eyes were shining like beads, and he was looking right at the little duck.

Nearer and nearer the rat crept. The duck tried to get up on his feet.

He was so frightened that he cried, "Peep! peep!" as loud as he could.

It was a small, weak voice, and the only one to hear it was the old drake. He knew that it was a cry for help, and he began to paddle and flutter as fast as he could toward the shore, all the time crying, "Quack! quack!" in such a way that all the other ducks heard it and knew something was wrong.

The rat had stopped now, as if he did not quite know

what to do; and just as the drake reached the shore, he turned and started to crawl back under the house. But he was too late. One rap of the old drake's bill sent him over on his back. Before he could get up the drake had hit him another rap, and squealing loudly, the rat ran in under the duck-house, glad to get away. The rat family had no dinner that night, and the old father rat had to stay in bed for three days.

As for the little duck, he was happy enough to have his mother take him by the wing and drag him up the board and into the nest.

The Indian Basket

ON the top shelf of the what-not in grandmother's old-fashioned room had stood for many years the Indian basket. Grace and Ethel always thought of it in big capital letters, because of the way in which it had come into the family, and the care that grandmother took of it.

In the old days, when grandfather was a young man, he had crossed the plains to the great West; and one day, when he was riding alone by the banks of a little stream, he had come upon the bones of a child — a little Indian girl, he thought, because of some pieces of what had once been her dress. The bones were white and clean, and on some of them were marks that looked as if they had been made by teeth — probably the teeth of wolves. Near by lay the Indian basket.

It was beautifully made, of closely woven twigs and grasses, some of which had been colored with bright dyes that made a curious pattern on the finished basket. In shape it was nearly round, and in size about as large as a small cabbage. When grandfather found the basket, there was nothing in it but a few pebbles from the bed of the stream, and two or three pretty shells of fresh-water mussels — just the kind of things that a little girl would like to play with.

Grandfather took the basket, and brought it home

with him and gave it to grandmother; and many a time Grace and Ethel had heard the story of the little Indian girl, and wondered how she had happened to be alone by the stream, and whether it was really wolves that had got her.

Of course, grandmother took great care of the basket. She seldom used it; and as for the little girls, they were not allowed to take it at all except when grandmother herself put it into their hands, full of fruit, or flowers, or other dainties for some sick neighbor; and then they were told to carry it carefully and to be sure to bring it back.

But one day they were left alone; and after playing for a time at one thing or another, they stole into grandmother's room. In its usual place on the shelf stood the basket.

"Let's take it out in the garden and pick it full of raspberries," cried Grace.

"All right," said Ethel. And in a moment they were on their way.

It took them half an hour to fill the basket. The ripe, juicy berries they poured carefully into a dish, and were just about to put the basket back in its place, when Ethel noticed that the berries had made some red stains on the inside of it; so they took it to the kitchen sink and with a wet cloth wiped the stains out; but the cloth left a few drops of water in the basket, and Ethel turned it upside down to let them run out.

"Oh, look!" cried Alice. "When it's that way, it is

just like the helmets that soldiers used to wear! The handle is the strap to go under the chin!" She picked up the basket and set it on Ethel's head.

It sat tippily in its place, rocking from side to side, until, with a sudden push, Alice jammed it down. Then it slipped over Ethel's forehead and ears, until it covered her whole face and rested on her shoulders.

Both of the little girls began to laugh, and Ethel told how funny everything looked from inside the basket: how it made everything look speckled with spots of light, and dim and shadowy, as it was in the grape-arbor.

But in a little while they grew tired of the fun, and Ethel found it very warm inside the basket; so she tried to take it off; but it would not come off. Inside the basket were the sharp ends of the hundreds of little twigs, of which it was made, all pointing upward. Whenever she tried to move the basket, the ends of the twigs caught in her hair and pricked her face.

"Oh, Alice," she cried, "help me! I can't get it off!"

So Alice pulled and pushed, too; but more and more the sharp twigs caught and pricked, until Ethel was crying with the pain and Alice from fright; and still the basket would not move.

But just then there was a sound of wheels in the door-yard and father's loud voice calling, "Whoa!" to old Buster; and in a minute the whole family — father, and mother, and grandmother — came running in to see what was the matter. They found both children crying,

Ethel still with the basket on her head, and Alice dancing up and down and shaking her hands in terror, and saying over and over again, "Oh, they'll have to do it! they'll have to do it!"

In a minute mother's quiet voice had soothed her into a gentle sobbing, and in the meantime father had taken his sharp knife from his pocket and carefully cut a long slit in the basket, and holding the edges of the slit apart, had lifted the basket from Ethel's head. Then he said, "There, there! It's all over. Now, don't cry any more. What was it, Alice, that made you so frightened? What was it you thought we should have to do?"

"Why, I never thought you could cut the basket," answered Alice through her tears. "I thought the only thing you could do would be to cut Ethel's head off."

The old basket still stands on the shelf, although no longer in grandmother's room, for grandmother is not there now; but there is a long, ugly cut in one side of it. Alice and Ethel are quite grown up, and have gone away, and have little girls of their own; but when they go back to the old home and see the basket, they laugh about the time when, as Alice says, that cut saved Ethel's life.

A Son of the Mountains

IN front of the two children stood something that was plainly alive, but so clumsy, so young, so helpless that it was hard to tell what it was. From one end of a round ball of yellow-and-white wool looked two lovely brown eyes. From the other end hung a fuzzy tail that was trying to wag only itself, but was really wagging the whole ball.

"Oh, what is it? Is he ours?" they cried together.

And their father answered, with a smile, "Yes, he is yours. A new playmate who, if you are kind to him, will be a friend as long as he lives; for he comes of a noble family, which for five hundred years has had the love and the respect of the whole world."

So it was that the St. Bernard puppy came to his new home — a home blessed by two childish hearts that from the first regarded their new friend as little less than human, and, as the years passed, found little reason to change their faith. That night their father told them this story.

"I said that his family is five hundred years old," he began, "and I told you the truth. Between Italy and Switzerland is a great chain of mountains. Higher and higher they rise, till at last you come to a place where it is winter for nine months of the year; where there is no tree or shrub or blade of grass — only bare rocks and

snow and ice. For nine months in the year the ice does not melt, and in the winter the snow is often forty or fifty feet deep — higher than the top of our house.

"Over that road, even in the winter, men go to find work; and sometimes, when the great storms come, they lose their way and lie down in the snow, where, if someone does not find them, they die of the cold.

"So it has always been. More than two thousand years ago men found their way over that part of the mountains, and made a road there; and even great armies, in shining breastplates and glittering steel caps, toiled slowly up, some of the men to find their way down the sunny slopes on the other side, and some to lie forever beneath the snow on the top.

"And then, about a thousand years ago, a good monk who, it is said, had been a brave soldier himself, built a great stone house at the highest point of the road, and with other monks went there to live, so that, when the winter storms were fiercest, they might go out to find and help lost travelers buried in the snow.

"For forty years the good monk did his work, and when he died others took it up, and it has gone on ever since. At first the monks worked alone; but by and by, nearly five hundred years ago now, they got some dogs and trained them to help. Because the dogs had so keen a sense of smell, they were able to find lost travelers that the monks might have missed. Every year they saved some lives; and so, ever since then there have been dogs at the Great St. Bernard Pass, always of the same

kind, and all of them descended from those that the monks first took there. The puppy that I have brought you is one of that great family.

"The best-known member of the family was a wonderful dog named Barry. There is a monument to him near the place where he did his work, and where he died. It may seem strange to you to hear me speak of a dog's work, but Barry did more to make him beloved than most men, for he saved the lives of thirty-nine persons; and, indeed, he died in trying to save another. A young officer had lost his way in a great storm, and had been covered by the snow. He was beginning to feel the drowsiness that creeps upon people who are freezing to death, when something began to paw the snow from about him, and a great hairy beast began to lick his face. He could think of nothing but a wolf, and in his fright he drew his sword and drove it into Barry's heart. So died the most famous of all the St. Bernards.

"But there is another story that the monks tell, less sad but not less strange. One night, at a time when there was not much travel over the pass, there came a knock on the door of the great stone house. The monk who went to the door found a group of rough-looking, ragged men who said they were cold and hungry. When they had been warmed and fed, and the monks were about to show them where they were to sleep, the strangers suddenly drew pistols and long knives and commanded that the treasure-chest be brought to them. The head of the household, thinking that if he did not

obey all might be killed, sent one of the brothers to fetch it.

"In a little while he came back — but not alone, for with him were the dogs. At a word of command they leaped upon the robbers and bore them to the ground. Not one of them tried to tear a man, but the moment a robber made a motion to get up he found the great white teeth bared in his face; and so they had to lie still.

"The monks bound the men and locked them in a cell, where they kept them safe till they were able to give them over to the law.

"So you see your new playmate is the youngest of a very great family of dog noblemen. Treat him as his rank deserves."

The Family Garden

WHEN the Monks family moved from the city to the country they were delighted to find that there was land enough round their new house to make a fine garden. That was what they had always wanted.

"We must hire a gardener," said Father Monks, "a man who knows how to make a garden, so that we can have something to be proud of."

"Oh, no, my dear," said Mother Monks; "that would only be a garden that the gardener might be proud of. I think it would be much better to make a garden all by ourselves. There are so many of us that, if each one helps, I am sure we can make a beautiful garden; and when it has grown and people see it, they will think, not of a hired gardener, but of us."

"Very well," said Father Monks, "we will do it that way, if you wish. You shall begin. Then Arabella and Violet and Viola shall add what they please, and after that John and Joseph and Peter and Samuel and Pansy may help; and when all the rest of you have done what you wish, I will add the finishing touches."

"Goody!" cried all the family together; and they went to bed happy about what they were going to do.

Mother Monks began her part of the work the very next morning. First of all, she looked the ground over

carefully, and saw that, although there was a high hill on the other side of the road, their own land was quite flat. "I do not want anything fussy," she said to herself. "The simplest thing is always the best. I will make just one large round bed." So, with two stakes and the clothes-line, she drew a circle in the back of the yard, and the boys helped her to spade it up and rake it over; and by night they had a beautiful, smooth flower-bed that looked like this.

It was Arabella's turn next, and she, too, looked the ground over carefully before she began. But it seemed to her that her mother's plan was a good one, and as she could think of nothing better and there was still plenty of land to use, she, too, made a big round flower-bed, only hers was in the front; and when they had spaded it up and raked it smooth, the whole garden looked like this.

"You have made a fine beginning," said Father Monks, when he came home. "I am sure that if all of us do our part, we shall have such a garden as no one in this town ever saw before." And all the other members of the Monks family thought so, too.

Viola and Violet, the twins, could hardly wait to eat their breakfast the next morning before they began. They thought of many different things to do, but none of them seemed just right, until Viola had a happy thought. "Mother has a round bed, and Arabella has a round bed, too. Let us keep to the same idea. Since we are twins, we can both make round beds of the same size, and just alike."

So they did; and because when they were little they had slept in their mother's bed, they made their flower-

beds inside the big circle that their mother had laid out; and when they were done, the garden was so-fashion.

Now John and Joseph, the other twins, had promised to help make the garden; but they were lazier than their sisters, and when they went to work the sun was hot, and they wanted to get over to the brook to see whether it was warm enough to go in swimming; and so, instead of making round beds of their own,

they set out a few plants in their sister's beds, in a space that was only about a quarter of a circle. Then they ran away to the brook; so that night the garden looked this way.

When it came Peter's turn to help, he wanted to do something different, but everything that he tried looked wrong. He made plans, and as quickly gave them up. The others had made circles or parts of circles; and at last, all he could think of was to set out two big plants

in Arabella's bed, and in front of them a row of other plants in a long, curved line, so that when Father Monks came home he saw something like this.

Now Samuel Monks, unlike his two brothers, John and Joseph, was not lazy. He liked to dig, and did not care how hard he worked; so you can be sure that, when he began to make his part of the garden, it was bound to be good. Since all the others had made flower-

beds, he decided that for his part he would put a border round them. It was hard work, and long before he was done, his little back ached and there were blisters on his hands; but he felt well paid when his father came out and patted him on the back, and said, "Well done, my boy!" for the garden had grown to be like this

It was now the turn of Pansy, the youngest of the family. Since she was not very strong, nobody thought that she could do much; but they all let her alone, because this was to be a real family garden, in which each one not only was to have a part, but was to do just what he or she wished to do.

When Pansy had walked round the garden five or six times, she had a happy thought. She saw that outside the border that Samuel had made, there was still room for two more beds; and since her mother and her sisters had made round beds, she thought that she would show them that, although she was still only a little girl, she would some day be a woman like them; and so, after some thought and much measuring, she made two round beds just like theirs, one on each side of the border. And this is how the garden looked when she had finished.

"It is fine, and I am proud of my family," said Father Monks, as he walked round the garden that night; "but there is one thing you have forgotten. You have all made flower-beds or set out flowers. None of you have

thought of the good things to eat that we might raise. It is for me to add the finishing touches."

Very proudly he went to work to fill all the side spaces between Ma Monks's flower-bed and Arabella's with tomato plants.

When the last one was in the ground, Pa Monks stood up straight and rubbed his back, and said, "Now, my dears, the garden is done, and it is *our* garden. Each of us has helped to make it, and altogether it stands for the whole family, which a real garden should always do. And now, since it is a warm evening, let us all go up on the hill across the road and have our supper outdoors."

"Oh, good!" they all cried together. But when they were seated under the trees on the hill they happened to look across the road, to their own house, and the garden that they had made, and that now lay beneath them. This is what they saw.

"Why, Simeon," said Mrs. Monks, "we have done just what I wanted to do! We have made a garden that is really ours; it is a garden that is like us, and stands for the whole family."

"Yes," said Mr. Monks, laughing, "it looks just like us. What more could we wish?"

An Interrupted Vacation

THE summer of Arthur's eighth birthday his elder brother Henry and some of his friends were to spend in a camp in the mountains; and the more Arthur heard about it, the more he wanted to go.

When he first spoke about it, his mother said he was too young; but his father, after thinking it over for a day or two, told him, to his great joy, that he could go and stay one week.

He was to start on a Monday; but on that morning word came that Uncle Joseph was sick, and his father and mother decided that they must go to him by the first train.

It seemed as if Arthur would have to give up his trip, for the house must be locked, and there were other things to be done which it seemed hardly safe to intrust to a boy only eight years old.

"Still," said Mr. Hartwell, "I suppose he must learn some time. Perhaps he may as well begin now."

So after telling Arthur just how to close the house, his father and mother started on their journey, and he was left alone.

He was up very early the next morning, and after he had eaten the breakfast that had been laid out for him, he locked and bolted the back door, closed all the blinds on the south side of the house, made sure that he had

his tickets in his pocket, and carried his bundle out on the verandah. He was just going to lock the front door when, suddenly, Peter came running through the hall.

Now Peter is the cat — Arthur's special pet and friend. No one had thought of him — how he was to get in and out, or what he was to eat and drink while the family was away.

Arthur had to think quickly, for it was nearly time for his train to leave. He decided that the best plan would be to leave the back-chamber window open, and put food and drink on the kitchen floor. Peter often got into the house by climbing the grape-trellis and leaping in at the second-story window. It would be safer to leave that open than to leave open a window in the cellar or on the first floor, where someone might see it.

Arthur opened the chamber window and put a basin of water on the kitchen floor and a saucer of milk beside it. Then he ran over to the butcher's and got ten cents' worth of fresh meat, and left it with the milk and the water. Also he soaked a dozen crackers and left them in another dish. That, he thought, would last Peter a week, even if he caught no mice.

As Arthur opened the outside door to go to the station, he was startled by a loud bang! which sounded almost like a gun. It made him jump, but when he saw that it was only a chamber door that the wind had slammed, he laughed, and went out and locked the front door after him.

The first two days in camp were full of happiness.

How good everything tasted, and how pleasant it was to sleep on a sweet-smelling bed of hemlock boughs! And what fish there were to be caught! It was not until the second evening that Arthur even thought of Peter. Then the cracker he was eating made him wonder how his little four-footed friend was getting on.

Suddenly he remembered the bang of that door. Oh, why had he not thought of it before! It must have been the back-chamber door which had closed, and that was the room which Peter would have to enter. With the door closed, he could not get downstairs, could not get at his food, could not get anything to drink. Even now he must have been two days without a mouthful.

Arthur knew that he had not money enough to go back and return to camp again. If he went home, he would have to stay there. All his fun would be cut short. But it seemed as if all the time he could see poor Peter, looking thin and hungry, and could hear him calling.

By morning he made up his mind. Sadly he packed his things, and the first train carried him back to town. He grew anxious to get back.

Just as he was putting the key in the lock of the front door he heard a loud "Miau!" and Peter, thin and wild-eyed, came running round the house. As soon as the door was open, he dashed in, tore through the hall to the kitchen, and seized a piece of meat. He was so hungry that he even growled a little when Arthur tried to pet him.

The rest of that week was a hard time for Arthur.

But Peter would come and rub lovingly against him and purr like a little spinning-wheel.

His parents were still away, and he was obliged to stay with a neighbor. But Peter would come and push his head under Arthur's arm, and rub lovingly against him, and purr like a little spinning-wheel; and in the feeling that he had saved his little friend from suffering, Arthur found his comfort.

Phœbe Ann's Christmas Tree

ON a point of land that stretches far out into the sea and ends in a great rock, there stands a tall white lighthouse. At the foot of the lighthouse, and cuddled close up to it, as if to keep warm in the cold winds that roar in from the ocean, is a white house, built very strong of great stones, and some other little buildings in which are kept a boat and barrels of oil and other things needed by the lighthouse-keeper and his family.

The great rock is high and bare. Not a tree, or even a blade of grass, grows upon it, but all round is the sea; and sometimes, in the winter storms, the great waves dash against it till the spray reaches almost to the light. The waves seem like a pack of white wolves climbing up and up, to tear the keeper from his little room.

It is only at certain times that one can get from the lighthouse to the mainland. When the keeper has a man with him to help him launch the boat, he can row across the bay; but at other times the only way is to walk across the narrow neck of land that connects the point with the mainland, and is covered with water except when the tide is very low and the sea is perfectly quiet. Sometimes there are weeks when no one can reach the shore.

For a long time the keeper's little daughter, Phœbe

It blew so hard that the water swept clear across the point, and it looked as if Santa Claus could not get out to the lighthouse.

Ann, had been looking forward to Christmas, and counting the days. There were so many things that she wanted that she had not dared to tell Santa Claus of all of them, but she had finally made up her mind about those that she wanted most, and had written Santa Claus two letters about them. She had left the letters on the mantelpiece when she went to bed, and in the morning they were gone. So he must have got them. Phœbe Ann had had no answer, and was a little afraid something had gone wrong; but her father told her that Santa Claus was always so busy, especially just before Christmas, that he seldom had time to answer letters. He thought the old gentleman would come on time if the weather was not too bad.

But the weather was bad all Christmas week, — so bad that Phœbe Ann's father could not get over to the mainland, — and the day before Christmas was the worst of all. It blew so hard that the water swept clear across the point, even at low tide, and it looked as if Santa Claus could not get out to the lighthouse.

Early in the morning the keeper and his family had seen a great ship coming up the coast. It was plain that she was having a hard time in the high seas and strong head wind, and so they were not surprised when, about noon, she came to anchor a little way out, in the shelter of the point. But they were very much surprised a little later to see a boat with six or seven men in it put off from the ship and start in toward the light. They watched it as it tossed on the waves like a cork, then

dropped down again out of sight, till they thought it was lost; but all the time it kept coming nearer, until at last the keeper ran down to the landing, and helped the men pull the boat up.

They had come for help. The ship was just home from China and the East Indies. The captain had been taken sick, and was very weak and low, and the officer in charge of the boat had come to see if he could get some fresh, nourishing food for him.

While the lighthouse-keeper and the officer went up to the house, Phœbe Ann stayed down by the boat and talked with the sailors. She told them about the letters she had written to Santa Claus, and how much afraid she was that he could not get to the lighthouse now. But the sailors cheered her up. They said that perhaps, instead of coming with his team of reindeer, he would put on his diving-suit and swim out. They said he had web-feet and could swim like a fish, anyway; and even if he did not get there just on time, he would probably send the things later, and she must not mind a little waiting.

Phœbe Ann stayed by the boat until her father and the officer came back, carrying two live chickens and a basket of eggs and some vegetables. Then the boat rowed back to the ship, and Phœbe Ann went into the house to help her mother. There was a good deal to do that day in getting ready for the Christmas dinner, so Phœbe Ann did not know that the boat came back again and left a big box on the landing, which her father

covered with an old sail and brought up to the house that evening, after dark. She went to bed early, rather sad, because she was sure now that Santa Claus could not come.

But oh, the next morning! Phœbe Ann jumped out of bed and rushed into the dining-room, where she had hung her stocking by the chimney. The stocking was gone, but there were two stockings, both very fat and bunchy, hanging on the funniest little Christmas tree, which stood in a great green pot. It was not like a common Christmas tree, but had big, thick, rubbery green leaves.

From branch to branch stretched strings of pop-corn, and here and there were little sparks of fire, from sticks that burned only at the end, and sent up a delicious, sweet smell. On one limb was a little gray goose that danced up and down and flapped its wings gently. On another was a brown monkey, hanging by one hand and holding a little dish in the other. At the foot of the tree was a pile of funny nuts, all hubbly on the outside, but very sweet and chewy inside. There were two beautiful fans, and three funny Japanese dolls, with slanting black eyes and a queer little topknot of hair; and there were beautiful things to make dresses for the dolls. Last of all, and most astonishing, was a letter from Santa Claus himself, saying that he just happened to be coming up the coast on the China ship, and had stopped to leave the things before he went ashore.

"Just to think, papa," said Phœbe Ann, at dinner,

"how wonderful it is that Santa Claus should come just in time, on that ship!"

"Yes," said her father, "Santa Claus is one of the most wonderful things in the world."

The Little Water People

UNCLE ZEB was sitting by the kitchen fire, with Jessie on one knee and Tom on the other. There was a roaring fire in the stove, and by and by the big teakettle began to sing.

At first it was a soft, low humming, then it rose to a sweet little song that sounded like someone whistling away off in the distance; and it kept getting louder and louder, as if the whistler were coming nearer; and then it was almost like a scream, and the cover of the kettle began to bob up and down.

It was such a funny noise that Tom and Jessie both laughed.

"What makes the kettle sing that way? Why does it make that noise?" asked Jessie.

"That," said Uncle Zeb, "is the Little Water People asking to be let out."

"The Little Water People!" cried both the children together. "Who are they? Do they live in the teakettle? We never heard of them before."

"Well," said Uncle Zeb, "I can't tell you what they look like, because nobody has ever seen them; but we know they are there because we see what they do.

"They are very funny Little People — so small that hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of them can live in a teaspoonful of water and have plenty of room."

"Do they always live in the water?" asked Jessie.

"Yes, always in the water. When it is cold, they keep perfectly still. They never sing or talk or shout then. But when the water begins to get hot, then the Little People rush round every way, trying to get out.

"If they find they are shut in, they begin to sing a little song, all together, in a tiny, piping voice: 'Oh, please let us out! It's very warm in here. Please let us out!' That song is pretty to hear, because all the people are polite, and say please.

"But in a little while, if you don't do anything, they begin to shout in a louder voice: 'Let us out! Let us out! Let us out! Let us out!' And then the Little People begin to scream and climb up on each other's shoulders, and jump over one another to get out.

"A few of them squeeze through under the lid of the teakettle, and others come through the spout; but they can't get out fast enough that way. They are like the boys over at Tommy's school, when they all try to get through the door at the same time."

"But what if you don't let them out? What do they do then?"

"Well, they all bend their heads down, and get their backs and shoulders against the under side of the cover, and press hard with their hands; and then they give a great shout and push all together, and lift the lid a little way. And every time they do that a lot of them get out."

"They are doing it now!" cried Jessie, eagerly, as the kettle cover bobbed up and down.

"Are they good or bad people?" asked Tommy.

"They are good," his uncle answered, "so long as they are shut up in strong iron prison-houses, where they cannot get out; then they will work hard day and night. They are so strong when they work together, that they can do more than a thousand men. It is these Little People of the Water who pull all the big trains of cars and push all the steamboats."

"I wish I could see them or catch some of them," said Tommy. And before Uncle Zeb could stop him, he had stretched his hand out to the teakettle cover. He drew it back very quickly.

"Yes," said Uncle Zeb, "they are good, so long as they are shut up; but when we get in their way they bite."

Curing Rosa May

ON the morning when Bessie Norton was six years old, she came down to breakfast to find a long box all tied up in pink paper, with a string that was like a little gold chain. The box stood on the table by Bessie's plate, and there was a card on it, with some writing. Bessie could read print, if the words were not too long, but she had not yet learned to read writing; so she ran to her mother with the card and asked her to read it.

"It says, 'For Bessie, with best wishes for many happy birthdays,'" said mother; and then she helped to untie the gold string and take off the pink paper.

When at last the box was open, there appeared the most beautiful paper doll that Bessie had ever seen. It had lovely golden hair, curling in little ringlets all over its head, and its eyes were large and blue, and its cheeks like blush roses, and with it were all kinds of beautiful dresses. There was a light pink one for parties, with a hat to match, and a plain dark-blue sailor suit for everyday wear, and two dainty white ones to dress up in in the afternoon. Each one had a hat to go with it, and there were also lots of dainty lace underclothes, and two hand-bags and a parasol.

Bessie was so happy that she could hardly wait to eat her breakfast. As soon as it was over she took the beau-

tiful doll, and went with her to the house of her playmate, Nellie Baker, who lived next door. All that day the two played together with Rosa May under the trees; and in the afternoon they gave a party, because, you see, it was Rosa May's birthday just as much as it was Bessie's.

Many other days they played together, too, and Rosa May always had the best of care, and was taken into the house and put to bed at the right hour. But at last there came a day when a band came marching by, playing beautifully, while Bessie was dressing Rosa May. She ran out to the fence, and then followed a little way down the street, and when she came back her mother called her in to supper, and poor Rosa May was forgotten.

It rained hard all that night, but of course Bessie did not know it, for she was asleep. But the next morning she looked everywhere for Rosa May, and could not find her. At last she went out under the trees, and there she found the poor doll, where she had lain all night in the rain.

It was a sad, sad sight. One blue eye was all washed out, and the other was nearly gone. Her right arm was doubled back and broken, both legs were all twisted, so Rosa May could never stand up straight again, and in place of the pretty rosy lips there was only a great ugly red mark.

Bessie sat down beside her dear Rosa May and began to cry. Of course she could not help it. No little girl

could. She cried so hard that she did not hear the sound of footsteps coming nearer, and did not know there was anyone about until a pleasant voice said, "My! my! little girl, what is the trouble?" The voice came from a pleasant-faced young man, who had a little box, like a trunk, in one hand, and a big light-colored umbrella and a bundle of sticks under his arm.

Bessie showed him her poor Rosa May, through her tears.

He took the doll tenderly in his hands, and said, "Well, well, she has met with a very bad accident, I see, but I think perhaps I can cure her."

"Oh, can you?" cried Bessie. "Are you a doctor?"

The young man laughed. "Yes," he said, "I think I can cure this patient if you will let me operate just as I think best."

"Oh, yes, sir!" cried Bessie. "You can, if you will only cure Rosa May!"

The young man took out a little pair of scissors, and then opened his box and found some smooth, stiff white cardboard. Then he took poor Rosa May and cut her head right off! Bessie almost cried right out at that; but the young man was smiling so pleasantly that she did not. He took the cardboard and cut out a new head, just like the old one, and then with a little glue from his box he fastened it on to Rosa May's body, so that you could hardly see the place. Next there came out of the wonderful box a bundle of little tubes of paint, some of which he mixed in a small china pan;

In a few minutes the new face had two big blue eyes and a rosebud mouth and curly, golden hair and a pair of pink cheeks.

and in a few minutes the new face had two big blue eyes and a rosebud mouth and curly, golden hair and a pair of pink cheeks — just as Rosa May had had at first.

By this time Bessie was so happy that she was dancing up and down; and when the young man cut off one arm and both legs of Rosa May, she did not mind at all, because she knew he would make new ones as good as the others had been at first. And he did, so that no one would ever have known that Rosa May had ever had any accident or been sick.

Bessie thanked him over and over again. She asked him if he was going to doctor someone else, and he laughed and said no, he was going to paint a picture. As he turned away he said, "You must be careful not to leave Rosa May out at night again, for young children like her take cold, and sometimes you can't get a doctor who knows how to cure them."

On Salt-Water Ice

BILLY PENFIELD stood on the doorstep of his house, and looked at the frozen river. In his hand he held a note that his mother had told him to take to Mrs. Miller, who lived two miles down the road. His mother had expected him to walk, but as Billy looked at the river he began to think of his skates. With them he could go and come much quicker. So, going quietly back into the house, he got his skates, and slipped as quietly out again, and went down the bank to the river.

Now, Billy knew as well as anyone that the river at Weldon is salt, and for several miles above the town, too. He knew that salt water does not freeze so quickly as fresh water. In fact, it was not often that anyone tried to skate between Weldon and Bramfield, for it was not regarded as safe. But this year it had been different. The cold weather had made ice that seemed very hard and thick, and for several days Billy had seen skaters passing up and down in front of his house. So he made up his mind to try it.

For a little while everything went well — so well that Billy did not notice how warm the day was. Instead of being sharp, like the week that had gone before, it was milder, and there was a misty softness in the air. The skate-tracks were easy to follow, and Billy kept along

where other skaters had passed, although it took him nearer to the middle of the stream than he had meant to go.

He had skated about half a mile when suddenly, without any warning, his right foot broke through the ice far enough to wet his ankle. He was going fast, and as the ice under his left foot held firm, he was neither stopped nor thrown down.

But the mishap frightened him. He did not know that salt-water ice gives no warning, no sound of cracking before it breaks, but merely drops away under your feet. If he had known that, he would have been more frightened.

As quickly as he could, he turned in toward the bank, but still went on up-river. He had taken hardly a dozen strokes when there came again that terrible feeling of standing on nothing. He felt himself going, and this time both feet went in. What he did then he must have done in the least little part of a second — so quickly that it did not seem to him that he thought to do it at all, but only did it; and it was the only thing that could have saved his life. As he felt himself dropping through, he bent the upper part of his body forward, like a half-opened jack-knife, so that he found himself up to his waist in the icy water, but with all of his body above the waist lying flat on the edge of the ice, and his arms spread out as far as he could reach.

For a moment he lay there panting with fear, and then, very slowly and very carefully, he began to draw

himself out, but with no quick motions, and without moving his hands an inch nearer the edge of the hole.

When at last he found himself once more out on the ice, he did the very best thing that he could have done: he lay still, face down, without trying to get up, and with his arms still spread out. Then, lifting one foot after the other enough to dig the toes of his skates into the ice, he began to kick himself along toward the shore.

It was slow work, and it hurt his knees and made his toes ache, and he was shivering with the cold; but never once did he try to stand up or to draw his arms in toward his body, till his head bumped against the rough cakes of ice that the tides had piled along the bank. Then, at last, he knew that he was safe, and he stood up.

Over the rough ice he climbed as quickly as he could, and with fingers numb with cold, took off his skates. He left them where they lay, and started on the run for Mrs. Miller's. There, in front of a great blaze in the fireplace, he was soon warm and dry enough to go home.

The Little Path

ONE morning, a few weeks after Mr. Milliken had moved his family to the farm he had bought for a summer home, he was walking slowly up to the house from the front gate when he saw for the first time a funny little path.

Instead of running along beside the driveway, it ran right across it, and then up across the lawn; and as Mr. Milliken looked at it he wondered why anyone should want to go back and forth there so often as to make a path through the grass.

When he reached the house, he spoke to Harold and Jessie about it. "You must n't get into the habit of going back and forth across the lawn that way, my dears," he said. "It wears away the grass and does n't look well."

"Why, papa," cried Jessie, "we have n't been across the lawn at all in any one place!"

And Harold, too, said, "We have n't, papa, really."

Mr. Milliken thought that was strange, but he said no more until a few days later, when he happened to pass that way again and noticed that the little path showed more plainly than before. It looked deeper and was worn smoother. So he said again, "Children, are you sure you are not making that path across the lawn? Is n't there some game that you play there that you may have forgotten about?"

No, they were sure they had not played there at all, and they knew nothing about the little path. But after their father had spoken to them the second time, they went out to see what he meant.

They found a curious little track, or trail, about as wide as Harold's two hands, running right up across the lawn and disappearing in the orchard beyond. They could follow it easily until they got up among the apple trees, but there they lost it.

"Let's see if there is another end to it," said Jessie. So they followed the path back until they reached the driveway. Here, of course, the hard gravel showed no signs except the marks of the wheels, but Harold suddenly gave a little shout of delight, and pointed to the bank on the other side of the driveway. There the little path began again, and showed even more plainly. It went right up over one side of the bank and down the other, and the children, following it, found that it led down to the edge of the brook and ended there.

The more they thought about it the stranger it seemed. What could have made the path, and what could be using it now? For it was easy to see that whatever had made it was still passing back and forth over it every day.

They talked it over with their father and mother, but neither could give them any help. Then they went out to the stable and told Eben, the hired man, about it. When he had finished oiling the harness, he went with the children and looked the little path over carefully.

Then he said, quite seriously, "I think I know the fellow that made this path — or rather the fellows, for there must be several of them. How would you like to watch for them to-night?"

"Oh, lovely!" cried the children; and they could hardly wait until darkness fell and Eben was ready to take them out.

Before they started Eben made them promise to keep perfectly still while they watched, and neither to move nor to speak so much as a single word, even in a whisper. Then he took down the big lantern with a reflector, which was always placed by the stable-door, to light the driveway. He placed it in a large wooden box, over which he threw a blanket, and wrapped Jessie and Harold in two other blankets; then they all went out and lay down in the edge of the orchard, some distance from the little path, and prepared for a long wait.

It was very dark and very still. The katydids in the maples overhead kept answering back and forth, and now and then a frog croaked by the brook; but for the most part it was so quiet that Harold could hear his own heart beat.

Suddenly, when it seemed as if they had been there for hours, Jessie thought she saw a shadow slipping along the little path. She watched it closely and was sure it was something alive and moving. It would go along a little way and then stop, and then go a little farther and stop again.

Then Eben pinched her arm gently and touched

Harold on the shoulder, and both children could see him point at the moving shadow; but they remembered their promise not to move or speak, and kept perfectly still. They watched and seemed scarcely to breathe.

Not until the shadow had disappeared in the deeper shade of the orchard trees did Eben make any move. Then all at once he drew the blanket from the front of the box, and a wide space under the early sweet-apple tree was lighted by the rays of the big lantern with its brilliant reflector. And in that space, sitting up like a little educated dog, or a squirrel, sat a big gray muskrat, holding a yellow apple in his forepaws, and gnawing at it.

The light of the lantern came so suddenly and was so bright, that for a moment the muskrat was dazed and too much surprised to move; but then, dropping his apple as if he had suddenly decided that he did not like apples, anyway, he made a dash down the little path, and plop! they heard him go head first into the brook.

"That is the fellow that made the path — he and his family," said Eben. "I thought so. Muskrats are very fond of sweet apples."

How Christmas Came at Midsummer

IN the big, clean room, with its two rows of iron beds, the little boy had been lying a long, long time. At first he had tried to count the days, but somewhere in the second week he had lost the count, and had never found it again. All he could remember was that there had been snow on the ground when they had picked him up and carried him into the big white room. He knew that the snow must be gone now, for when the nurse raised him and put the two pillows under his head, he could look out into the yard and see the tops of trees, and the leaves on them were thick and green; and all day long, whether he was lying down or sitting up, he could hear birds singing. And besides, it had grown so hot!

When he could not sleep for the heat, the nurse would come and lay a cool hand on his forehead; and if that did not help him, she would say, "Well, I guess we shall have to get the bee." Then in a little while she would come in with something that looked like a big cage with a great black-and-yellow bee in it; and when she had set it on the table, she would put her finger to it and the bee would begin to fly round and round the cage with a low, soft humming. Then the air would grow cooler. A gentle breeze would begin to blow, and the little boy would find it easier to lie still; and by and by his eyes would close, and almost before he knew it he would be

asleep. But when he woke, the bee was always gone and the air was hot again.

Every morning the big doctor came to talk with him a little while, and every afternoon the other doctor came. But one day the big doctor came a second time just before dark, and brought two strange doctors with him. They sat a long time by the bed, and watched the little boy and held his hands and listened at his breast, as if they had thought there was something inside him that could speak. Then they began to talk together, and before they had finished talking the little boy's father and mother came in.

It seemed to the little boy that something must be troubling them, for they did not smile at him as usual; but instead, his mother came over and knelt by the cot and put her arms round him and said, "Dearest, what can we do to make you well again? Is there anything that you want that we can get for you? Tell mother what it is."

The little boy looked at her with the big, deep eyes that seemed always to be wishing for something, and said, "I want Christmas. Can't you make it Christmas for me now, mamma?"

"Christmas? Why, dearest, what a strange wish! Christmas does not come in midsummer, but only when it is cold and there is snow on the ground. Mother cannot make Christmas come now, dear. You must be a good boy and wait."

"But I have been a good boy and I have waited — so

long! — and it has n't come. It seems as if I could n't wait any more." And then, as the little boy looked at his mother, he saw that she was crying, and wondered why.

The big doctor went over and laid his hand on her shoulder. "Perhaps the little boy is right," he said gently. "He felt that he could not wait, and has put his case into other hands than ours — into better hands; and he shall have his wish." Then, turning to the little boy himself, he said, "Your mother did not know that I can make Christmas come whenever I please, but I can, for Santa Claus is an old, old friend of mine. Whenever I send for him he comes, even if he is at the North Pole. I shall send for him to-night. To-morrow you will see him, and it will be Christmas, for it is always Christmas where Santa Claus is."

Then he pressed the little boy's hand, and all the doctors and the little boy's father and mother went out.

That night the bee sang the little boy to sleep again; but it seemed to him that, as he lay there, people kept moving softly about his bed — people who slipped back and forth like shadows, without a sound. But the bee droned on and on, and he did not wake.

It was the sound of voices that made him open his eyes at last — the voices of people singing. And as he looked round him it seemed to him that the great room had grown smaller in the night. The walls now came close up round the bed, and from somewhere just beyond the wall came the sound of voices singing, —

"O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee to-night."

The little boy knew the song, for always on Christmas Eve they had taken him from his bed at midnight and carried him to the window; and, looking down, he had seen men and women standing in the street, singing that song. So he knew that Christmas had really come, as the big doctor had said it would.

As the singing ended, a part of the wall near the bed seemed to slip back out of the way, and in its place stood a Christmas tree — a wonderful tree, heavy with apples and oranges and candy and chains of pop-corn, and things that twinkled like stars, and other things that glowed like fire. At the foot of the tree stood a sled, and beside it a red wagon. There were other gifts, too, that come only at Christmas — a box of tools, and many soldiers marching all one way, not looking at all at the little boy, but straight ahead.

Before the little boy had had time to see all the things, he heard a noise on the other side of the bed; and as he looked, the wall slipped aside and Santa Claus stood before him. He was dressed all in red, as he always is, and his long white beard twinkled with frost and snow; but under the big fur cap and the bushy eyebrows the

When the big doctor came that day the little boy was sleeping.
By his side lay the skates and the little ship.

little boy could see two kind blue eyes that looked just like the big doctor's.

"Little boy," said Santa Claus very softly, "I have come a long, long way to see you and bring you your Christmas — all the way from the North Pole. Are you glad?"

The little boy looked up into his face with eyes round with wonder but sparkling like stars. "Oh, yes, sir!" he said, "I am — I am — so glad — so — " Then, all at once, he put his arms over his face and began to cry.

Santa Claus stood a little while by the bed, watching him, very still. Then he reached over to the tree and took down the pair of skates and a little ship, and laid them on the bed beside the little boy, and slipped away without a word.

When the big doctor came that day, the little boy was sleeping. By his side still lay the skates, and one hand hugged the tiny ship. He was sleeping as he had not slept before since they had brought him into the big white room. The doctor did not try to wake him, but merely bent above the cot a moment and listened. Then he rose, tall and erect, and, looking straight ahead, he said to the nurse, "Come. All is well with the little boy now." And they both went out on tiptoe.

Grandfather's Nickname

GRANDFATHER BARTLETT'S first name was Jonathan, but one of his brothers, and two or three old men who had known him all their lives, would sometimes call him "Wolf." It used to seem very strange to the grandchildren; but one day their grandmother told them this story:—

"It began way back when grandfather was only five years old, and his father and mother started, with thirty other families, to cross the great plains and make new homes for themselves where land was free and the farming was easier.

"They traveled in great covered wagons drawn by two or three yoke of oxen, and all together made up a train nearly half a mile long. Under the wagons, swinging from the axles, hung the kettles and pots and pans in which they cooked their meals by the open campfires; and all day long, as the slow oxen plodded through the dust, you could hear the kettles go cling! clang! tink! tank! as they struck against one another.

"Sometimes they slept in the big wagons; but when it was pleasant and not too cold, the blankets were spread on the ground, with the big wagons backed into a circle like a fence round about the camp, and the men taking turns in keeping awake to see that no Indians crept up, and that wolves did not get the cattle.

"But often after supper, as you sat by the blazing fire, somewhere out of the darkness beyond the ring of wagons a sound would rise that made you feel creepy all over, and like snuggling close to your father — a wild, high-sounding howl, now rising, now falling; seeming now to come from one side, now from the other. And pretty soon another howl like it would begin, and then another, until there were more than you could count, and you shivered, and were glad when Captain Lane stirred up the fire.

"It was funny to see old Shep when the howling began. The first time he heard it, he began to bark with all his might, and rushed out between two wagons, into the darkness; but in a few minutes there was a quick thump of feet, and back he came, on the jump, whining, with his tail between his legs. But the men in the camp said they liked to hear the howling, because they knew that as long as it kept up there were no creeping Indians about.

"So the long days went by, until one evening when they made camp a little earlier than usual because they had found a good spring of water. The day before that had been grandfather's fifth birthday, and one of the hunters in the party had made him a whistle from the leg-bone of an antelope; and so, on this evening, instead of playing with the other children, he had taken his whistle and gone off by himself.

"He walked a long way, and when he turned to go back he could not see any camp or hear any voices; but

he knew that the wagons could not be far away, and so he kept walking.

"By and by the sun dropped out of sight and it began to grow dark, and still there was no camp. The little five-year-old boy was tired and hungry, and began to be afraid. He sat down in a little hollow in the prairie and cried; but no one came, for no one heard him. And then, after what seemed a long time, it began to be light again, and he saw that the great round moon was peeping over the edge of the hollow in which he sat.

"But also on the edge of the hollow, right beside the moon, sat something else — something that looked like old Shep. The little boy called to him, 'Come, Shep! Nice doggy! nice old Shep!' but the thing did not come. Instead, it stood up and backed away. The little boy stood up, too, and started to run toward the dog; but the strange dog did not wait, as Shep would have done, but turned and slipped away. In a few minutes it was back again, sitting just where it had sat before; and a little at one side sat another, just like it.

"The little boy put the bone whistle to his lips and blew it hard. Both of the gray figures on the edge of the hollow jumped so quickly that they almost fell over backward. That made the boy laugh, and he blew again, and turned round to see if the strange dogs were anywhere in sight. Behind him one of them was just coming back. It sat down on the edge of the hollow and watched, and the full moon, shining on its eyes, made them look big and green. He turned round again, and there

sat the other two, just where he had seen them at first; and then another came, and another, until there were five.

"And then, all at once and all together, they began to make the long, long howl that he had so often heard in the cozy camp; and he saw that they held their heads high in the air and their noses pointed to the sky, and that they were singing together the song that had made him feel so creepy and nestle up to his father. He knew, then, that they were not dogs, but wolves.

"He tried to cry, but the whistle was in his mouth, and he made only a funny little noise. The wolves stopped singing and stood up. He blew again, this time with all his might. They ran back a few steps. Once more he sounded the whistle, now in little toots, now in a long, high squeal; and then, almost before he knew it, the gray shapes on the edge of the hollow were gone, and he saw flashes of light, and heard the crack of pistols and the cries of men and the sound of galloping horses. And down the side of the hollow, bounding and barking, came Shep himself.

"The next thing that grandfather knew, his father had him in his arms, on horseback, and they were galloping back to camp. So that is why they gave him the nickname of 'Wolf' Bartlett."

Lemonade Sandy

SANDY was yellow. His small ears hung down most of the time, but they stood up sharply when you spoke to him. His hair was stiff and wiry, and grew so thick round his face and eyes that it looked like whiskers. The first time Mr. Tolman saw him, he said, "He looks like a Scotchman. You should call him Sandy." So that is how he got his name.

No one knew where he came from. Don Furber found him on the doorstep one morning. When Don came out, the dog wagged his stumpy tail and looked up, as if to say, "Good morning! This is a fine day. What shall we do?" And all day long they played together — Don and the dog and the other children in the street. At noon they gave him a bone, with plenty of meat on it, and he ate it quietly and thankfully, like a gentleman. He followed Don home that night, but did not attempt to go into the house. Instead, he curled up under the lilac-bush by the back door and went to sleep.

But the next morning, instead of being on Don's doorstep, he was on Lewis Norton's; and to Lewis, too, he seemed to say, "Good morning! This is a fine day. What shall we do?"

And that is how Sandy came to Kay Street. Sometimes he stayed at one house, sometimes at another, but all day he played with the children. Some one

always fed him, an honored guest, first at one house, then at another, until everybody on the street grew to know and like him.

And then one hot day a wagon came into the street — a wagon painted black, with iron bars across the back of it, and along the sidewalk went a man who carried a net at the end of a long pole. Sandy was sitting in front of Don Furber's house, and Don and some of the other children were playing under a tree in the yard. Before Sandy knew what the man with the net was going to do, he found the net over his head and the man's hand on his ear. He let out a frightened yelp that made the children look up, and then they all started on the run.

"What are you doing with Sandy?" they cried.

"I've got to take him away," the man said. "He has n't any collar on. Nobody has paid his license."

"How much is it?" asked Lewis, with round, frightened eyes.

"Two dollars," answered the man. "It ought to have been paid on the first of May, if you wanted to keep him. Is he your dog?"

"He is our dog," they all cried together. And then Susie Harris spoke up.

"Can we keep him if we pay?"

The man laughed. "Why, yes, I think so. Have you got the money?"

"No," said Susie, "but I know how we can get it. Will you wait till next week?"

The man stopped to think a moment. Then he said,

It was hot, hot weather, and as people went by, the cold lemonade looked tempting. They, too, heard the story of Sandy.

"Yes, I'll wait a week, if you will promise to keep him tied up."

Of course they promised, and the man drove away on the black wagon, and Susie told of her plan — to make lemonade and sell it from a little stand on the edge of the sidewalk.

An hour later there was a little table in the front yard of the Furber home, and on it a clean cloth and clean glasses and a big pail of lemonade. And Don was behind it, crying, as people passed on their way home from the railway-station, "Ice-cold lemonade here, fresh made, five cents a glass!"

It was hot, hot weather, and as the people went by, mopping their faces and carrying their hats in their hands, the cold lemonade looked tempting. In a little while, too, they heard the story of Sandy.

The next day and the next it was the same; and before the end of the week the little pasteboard box beside the lemonade-pail had in it not only two dollars, but nearly four. And then, in a happy procession, with Sandy tugging at his rope, they marched to the town hall and paid the license fee. After that they went to a hardware store and paid some more money to a man who said, yes, he would have it done that day. And now, if you should see Sandy, you would find that instead of a rope round his neck there is a fine collar, with a shining brass plate on it that says, "Lemonade Sandy, Kay Street."

Caught in a Flood

THE sun was shining, the dew was sparkling like diamonds on the grass, birds were singing, and the air was full of the sweet smell of flowers; yet to Walter Barnes and Luther Markham it was a sad morning. At four o'clock the two boys had seen their older brothers climb to the seat of a long buckboard, piled high with clothing, fishing-rods, a tent, and boxes of good things to eat. Then they had seen the wagon start on its twenty-mile trip to the camp in the big woods. It was because Walter and Luther were not to go themselves that they could not see the beauty of the shining dew or enjoy the songs of the birds.

"Well," said Walter, after the last sound of the buckboard had died away, "we can do one thing, anyway — take my old boat, the Marsh-hawk, and explore Birch Island."

"Good!" cried Luther. And soon the two boys, with boxes packed full of cold meat and bread-and-butter and jelly and marble-cake, were pushing slowly up the stream in the broad, safe old Marsh-hawk, which Mr. Barnes had bought for the boys' own use.

It is nearly two miles to Birch Island, but the boys reached it before the middle of the forenoon, and pulled the boat up on the sand-bar at the southern end. The island is long, narrow, and low. Over most of it is a thick

growth of white birches, with a fringe of alders and other bushes along the edge.

Slowly the boys worked their way ahead, looking for new plants and flowers, and counting all the birds' nests, for it was just the place that birds would like to build in. They were half-way up the eastern shore when Luther heard a strange sound. It was as if all the little bushes along the shore were whispering together, and all the pebbles singing.

"Hark!" he said. "What is that noise? It sounds like the wind, but it can't be, because the trees are not moving. Listen!"

"Why, it's the water!" cried Walter. "It's rising. Oh, I know! I heard father say they were going to open the gates of the dam up at the Gap, to start some logs."

Without being at all frightened, the two boys watched the creeping waters come up over the strip of sand, then up the stems of the lower line of bushes. But suddenly there was a louder and a different sound, and looking out, they saw a low wall of water rushing down upon them. In another moment it had touched their feet. Then it came over their ankles, and crept, cold as ice, half-way up to their knees.

"The trees, Walter, the trees!" cried Luther. And both of the now frightened boys made a rush for a birch tree big enough for them to climb and to hold their weight.

It was a strange sight that they saw from their perch on a strong limb. Birds were flying wildly about, crying

An old Indian in a red shirt, and with moccasins on his feet, held the canoe steady while the boys dropped carefully into it; and then, like an arrow, the little craft dashed away.

with fear for their young. Under the very tree where they sat, a gray rabbit floated by, splashing the water as he tried to swim; and a little later they saw two squirrels, swimming easily, and a weasel, with cruel little eyes that shone like two black beads.

The boys shouted for help as loud as they could; and after a time the help came, in a way that seemed to them as wonderful as the flood itself.

Suddenly a deep voice, almost under and a little behind them, called out, "Papoose no need be scare! Old Sebattis save!"

They turned their heads, to see a canoe close beside their tree, and in it a tall old Indian, in a red shirt, and with moccasins on his feet. He held the canoe steady while the boys dropped carefully into it, and then, like an arrow, the little craft dashed away for home. How the boys found in the canoe a drinking-cup and a berry-dish of birch-bark, and how old Sebattis taught them the way to make such dishes for themselves, would take too long to tell here; but it made a happy day for the boys. They were even glad that they had not gone with their older brothers, because then they would not have found old Sebattis.

Jimmie's Birds

EARLY on one fine, bright morning, just as Jimmie Bailey was starting for school, he heard a sweet, clear whistle from the tall elm tree in front of his house. At first he thought it was one of the other boys who had climbed up there and hidden, to fool him; but the tree was so big that no one could climb it without a ladder. Then the whistle came again, and there was a flash of something bright, like flame, and he saw that it was a beautiful bird that had made the call.

That afternoon he went out under the tree again. In a little while the bird came, carrying a long string in its bill. Its mate was with it this time, and Jimmie saw that they had begun to build a nest away out on the tip end of a swaying twig. The bird that made the sweet whistling call was of a beautiful bright orange color, with wings of jet-black, but its mate was dressed in a suit of yellowish brown, that Jimmie thought was not nearly so pretty.

It was a wonderful nest that they were building — a perfect little basket, or bag, of string and horsehair and lint and bits of bright-colored yarn; and it was so hung to the end of the twig that every breeze swayed and rocked it back and forth. At the same time, it was so far out from the trunk of the tree that no man or boy, even if he climbed the tree, could reach it, nor could even a cat get at the young birds.

The work of building the nest went on for three or four days, and then all at once it stopped. The mother bird — in her yellowish-brown suit — was about the tree, and seemed frightened. She flew about and back and forth, but did not work at the nest; and the father bird, in his coat of orange and black, was nowhere to be seen.

On Saturday afternoon Jimmie was looking out of the window, when he saw three or four other boys under a big maple tree farther down the street. All of them had sling-shots, and seemed to be shooting little stones at something up in the tree.

After watching them a while, Jimmie got his own sling-shot and went out.

"What are you shooting at?" he said.

"There's a bird up there, and we're trying to kill it. It's got caught and can't get away, and it will starve to death. Johnnie Reynolds saw it there three days ago."

Jimmie looked where the other boys pointed, and there, hanging head down from a limb, was his beautiful black-and-orange bird. It seemed to be tied by one leg. Its wings were stretched out, as if it were too tired to hold them up, and as it spun slowly round in the soft breeze, it fluttered feebly once or twice.

"Hold on, boys! Don't shoot again! Don't kill him! He is building a nest in the big elm in front of my house. I have been watching him for almost a week. Let's get the big ladder from my yard, and one of us go up and set him free."

Jimmie kept bravely on till he could just reach out and untwist the string that held the bird's leg.

The boys decided to do it. The four of them together could just carry the ladder out to the tree, but it was too heavy for them to raise. They did not know what to do then; but a man came along, and they told him about it, and he put up the ladder and held it while Jimmie went up.

It was a long, hard climb, even after he had gone clear to the top of the ladder; but Jimmie kept bravely on till he could just reach out and untwist the string that held the bird's leg. The poor thing was too weak even to cry out, but just lay still in Jimmie's hand until he climbed back to the ladder, and so down to the ground.

The string was twisted round and round the bird's leg, so that it took some time to unwind it and get it off. The bird must have been carrying it to its nest, when one end caught in the maple tree and the other end wound round its leg. Then the harder it struggled and the more it spun round, the firmer it was held.

When the bird was at last free, it lay still a moment on Jimmie's hand, and then fluttered away, up into the elm. That evening Jimmie saw both the mother and the father bird together, and the next morning they were at work again at the nest, and by midsummer a happy little family of four young Baltimore orioles was swinging in the cozy little basket. Jimmie calls them his birds, and everybody who knows about it thinks that he has a good right to do so.

An Indian Birthday Spoon

IN a clump of tall white birches, a little way back from the beach, a tent had sprung up, like a toadstool, overnight. It was Roy Allen's birthday, and he had gone out for a walk up toward the birches, trying to think what he could do to make the day happy.

The tent was stained and streaked, as if it had been used many years. In front of it a camp-fire was burning, and over the fire hung an iron kettle. In a log by the fire a small axe was sticking. It was plain that someone was living in the tent.

Roy's heart beat fast. Could it be that an Indian had come there to camp? The question was answered at once, for the flaps of the tent were pushed aside, and out came a tall old Indian, his hands full of long, thin strips of wood, like ribbons.

The Indian's wrinkled, sun-tanned face broke into a smile when he saw the boy. He nodded, and cried, "How?"

"Good-morning!" said Roy; and then he could not help adding, although he knew it was not quite polite, "Are you a real Indian?"

The old man laughed. "Real Injun; old Sa-ka-we-jis," he said. "Make um basket, make um broom, make um bow and arrow. You stay, you see."

Here was a chance, and Roy was quick to take it.

The old man went a little way out in front of the tent and threw down his bundle of wooden strips at the roots of a large tree. Then he went to the brook, and out of a pool took some pieces of ash as large as a broomstick and about as long. He also picked up a smooth, round stone the size of his fist, and brought that and the ash-wood back to the big tree. There he sat down, with Roy in front of him watching everything he did.

The Indian first took one of the pieces of ash and pounded it gently with the stone, all the way from one end to the other and back again. When he had done that, he took a long knife from his belt, and starting the blade at the end of the stick, between two layers of the grain, he pushed it slowly in. The wood split off in a smooth strip, unbroken from end to end.

When the whole stick had been split up in that way, the old man took eight or ten other pieces, round on one side and flat on the other, and laying them across one another, so that they looked like the spokes of a wheel, he tied them together in the middle with some long white roots almost as fine as thread.

Roy now guessed that this was to be the frame, or ribs, of a basket; and when the Indian took some of the thin, wet strips he had just split off and began to weave them round and round, over and under the ribs, Roy knew that he had guessed right.

The old man worked very quickly, without saying much, but every little while he would look up and smile. By and by, when the basket was more than half done,

he got up, and said, "Dinner-time now. You stay, eat dinner with Sa-ka-we-jis."

Without waiting for Roy to answer, he went into the tent, and came out with some potatoes, green corn, and onions, and a basket. Having peeled the potatoes and the onions, and shelled the corn, he put all of them into the kettle, boiling over the fire. Then he took the little axe, and with a few blows cut a young birch, trimmed it into a stick the length of a cane, sharpened one end of it, and with that and the basket, started for the beach. In a few minutes he was back again, with the basket full of fat, juicy clams, which he shelled and put into the kettle.

From time to time he stirred it, and as the cover was lifted and the steam poured out, Roy caught a smell that made him feel as hungry as a little bear.

When all was ready, the old man brought from the tent two small tin pans, and dipping one full for himself, he filled the other and passed it to Roy. Then he took a large spoon from his pocket and began to eat.

After a mouthful or two he looked up, and saw that Roy was not eating. At that he threw back his head and laughed. "White boy no spoon, no can eat soup. What can do?"

"I don't know, sir," answered Roy; and he began to think he was going to lose his dinner, after all.

"Wait. Sa-ka-we-jis show how. Make um Injun spoon," said the old man.

He got up, went into the tent, and came out with a

large wire nail. Taking a clam-shell in his hand, he held the sharp point of the nail against the shell, near the edge, and struck the nail two sharp blows with a stone. There were two holes in the shell! With his knife he cut a limb from a young birch, left it as long as his hand, and split one end of it. Into the split end he pushed the edge of the clam-shell, and with some of the fine roots he laced it in tight, through he two holes that he had punched. In ten minutes he had a spoon that would hold more than his own. As he passed it to Roy he said, "Now make clam eat um clam. Injun dinner, Injun spoon."

Never did any other dinner taste so good; and when Roy was allowed to take home the clam-shell spoon, he felt that he had a birthday present worth keeping. That was the beginning of a friendship which lasted all summer.

Uncle David's Brother

WHEN Alice came downstairs, she found her great-uncle David sitting in the parlor alone, and very grave and still. He had on his blue uniform with the shining buttons; and his sword, and the broad-brimmed hat with its black and gold cord, lay on the table beside him. Alice went over to the big chair where he sat, for her morning kiss. The old man put his hand upon her shoulder and looked down at her so long and so strangely that she felt a little afraid.

"My dear," he said at length, "I want to tell you a little story this morning. I know you will remember it, and every year when this day comes you will think of the man I am going to tell you about. One day, a long, long time ago, the news came that the President had called for men to go and fight for the flag. The first man in the town to say he would go was my brother Henry. Then I said I would go, too.

"It was very grand when we marched away in our new uniforms, with our shining guns. The bands played, and everybody cheered us, and we felt very proud and brave.

"But one night, after we had been away a long time and had fought in many battles, our regiment was waked up at midnight and marched forward to be ready for a great battle that was coming in the morning.

"By daylight the cannon had begun to boom, and in a little while the bullets were buzzing through the woods like great bumblebees, and big shells screamed through the trees, and the men were falling all around us. Clouds of smoke hid everything, so we could see only a little way.

"The enemy fought very bravely; but after a time we began to drive them back a little, and at length we were ordered to make a charge. We started on the run, everybody cheering, Henry and I side by side. Just before we reached the ridge where the enemy were waiting for us, I felt a sharp sting in my side, and everything grew black, and I fell.

"When I came to, it was dark. I was lying in a little wood, and could see the stars shining down through the trees. I got up and tried to walk, but I could n't stand. I thought if I could get to the edge of the wood someone might find me, so I crawled along slowly. By and by I saw a man sitting with his back against a tree, and it was Henry. Just think, dear, how glad I was to see him! He was wounded, too, but I did not know then how badly.

"We had been talking a few minutes when we heard a groan from a clump of bushes behind us. Henry crawled over and found a man in a gray uniform, badly hurt, and calling piteously for water. Neither of us had a drop. Henry crawled back and sat with me by the tree a little while; but he could not rest for thinking of the man in the bushes, who was dying for a drink of water.

"Over to the right we could hear a little running brook, and Henry started to crawl to it. He could move only very slowly, he was so weak from his wounds; but he never stopped or complained. He just dragged himself along till he reached the brook.

"The bank was high and steep, and he did not have strength to climb down; but he lay on the edge and lowered his canteen by a cord, and when it was full he drew it up. Then he crawled back to the man in gray and gave him the water. The poor fellow was so glad that he cried, and he made my brother tell him his name and where he lived.

"Henry crawled back to the tree and lay down beside me. We began to talk of our home, and by and by he asked me to sing, and I did; and Henry sang a little, too; and then the wounded man in gray, back in the bushes, took up the song in his poor, weak voice. But before long we heard him moaning for water again, and Henry dragged himself to the brook and got him some more, till he grew quiet.

"I must have fallen asleep then. When I waked, some men who had come to search for the wounded were bending over me. I looked all around, but I could not see Henry. Then the men looked, and found him near the brook.

"He was cold and still, my dear; but in his hand was the canteen, which he was trying to fill again for his wounded enemy.

"The wounded soldier in gray got well after a long

In his hand was the canteen which he was trying to fill again for his wounded enemy.

time, and once, when the war was over, he came here to talk with us about the man in blue who had brought him the water.

"Every year I keep this day in memory of my brother Henry — your grandfather, my dear. He was not a general or a colonel or a captain — just a plain private soldier. It may be that no one ever heard of him except the people in the town where he lived and the men in his company; but I am sure you will always be glad to put flowers on the grave of a grandfather who died so cheerfully, and who gave his last strength to help a man who had fought against him."

A Prisoner Set Free

OF all the windows that Nathan Fletcher had to pass on his way to and from school, there was no other at which he stopped so often or stayed so long as that of Potts & Hunter's animal store. The building stood at the corner of two streets, and had a window on each street, and there was always something alive to look at. Sometimes it was a pen full of hens and chickens; sometimes a flock of ducks paddling and splashing in a big cement basin. Once there had been two young bears that spent most of their time wrestling and boxing with each other, as if they were two small boys. Always, in one window or the other, there was a cage of kittens, and most of the time two or three pens of puppies.

It was the puppies that Nathan liked best, and one little dog, above all, he had seen there so long that he felt as if he knew him. Indeed, he even made up a name for him, — "Bounce," — because he was always jumping or dancing, or pawing the window or the side of the pen.

Nathan was sorry for Bounce. The other puppies did not seem to mind being shut up, but for Bounce the pen was a prison. In the street were carts to be chased, and other dogs to bark at, and cats to scare, and small boys to play with, and Bounce knew it, and wanted to get out; and Nathan knew it, and wanted to help him. It

seemed too bad that a little dog that had never done anything bad should be shut up so long in prison.

But how could Nathan set him free? The only way he could think of was to buy him; and when he had gone into the store one morning and asked how much they would take for the little black-and-white dog in the window, with the stubby tail, and stiff hair like whiskers on his face, and a yellow spot over one eye, and that held his head on one side and kept one ear higher than the other, and his name was Bounce, the man laughed, and said he guessed he would have to get about five dollars for such a dog as that; and Nathan went out feeling pretty bad, for he had not five dollars, no, nor half so much. And so it seemed that Bounce might have to stay in prison all the rest of his life.

But then came the morning when Nathan's father sent him down-town very early, — long before school, and even before breakfast, — for someone had to carry word to the plumber before his men left the shop.

The way to the plumber's led by the window of the animal store, and Nathan stopped a moment to see whether Bounce was still there. Yes, he was; and something else was there, too. The other puppies were crowded together in one corner of the pen, as if they were frightened; but Bounce was racing back and forth, leaping against the bars, and barking at the top of his high little voice. In the big room outside the pen was a large monkey, loose. The door of his cage in the corner stood wide open. Already the monkey had opened a bag

of corn and a bag of meal, and had thrown handfuls of both into the cage where the kittens were kept, and into the glass tank that held the goldfish. As Nathan looked, the monkey began to pull the tail feathers from a big black rooster; and when he grew tired of that, he took a watering-pot and began to sprinkle the kittens, the squirrels, and the parrots.

Without staying to see anything more, Nathan started on the dead run for the drug store on the next corner. Through the open door he rushed, straight to the telephone booth. In the big book he found first the number of Potts & Hunter, and then that of Mr. Potts's house. He dropped his nickel into the slot, and when the answer came, told the man at the other end of the line what he had seen. The man thanked him, and said he would go right down to the store. Then Nathan went on to the plumber's, and left the note his father had given him.

On the way back he saw a motor-car stop in front of the animal store, and a man dash up the steps and go in. Nathan, too, stopped and went in. The man was just closing the door of the big monkey's cage, behind the bars of which the monkey crouched, scolding and chattering. The whole store looked as if it had been turned upside down and inside out.

The man looked round when he heard Nathan's step. "Bad work," he said.

"Yes, sir," answered Nathan. "But I'm glad I was going by and saw him when I did."

"Oh, are you the boy that called me up?"

"Yes, sir," said Nathan. "I called you."

"Well, you did me a good turn, and I thank you. Are n't you the boy who came in here a few days ago and asked me how much we would take for the little dog in the window? I thought so. Well, now, see here: that dog is yours. He's a real, full-blooded mongrel, and knows a lot. You take him home with you as a present from me."

It seemed too good to be true, but it *was* true; for when Nathan went out, a black and white and yellow ball went with him. It dashed after wagons and got in the way of motor-cars, and leaped almost to Nathan's face, and slipped between his legs, and seemed to be everywhere at once, and nowhere when it was wanted. And the ball was Bounce, free of his prison, out forever from behind the bars, out in the sunlight and the air, with a boy who loved him and wanted a playmate, and who was sure there was no other playmate that was quite so much fun as a full-blooded mongrel puppy.

Pine-Needle Pictures

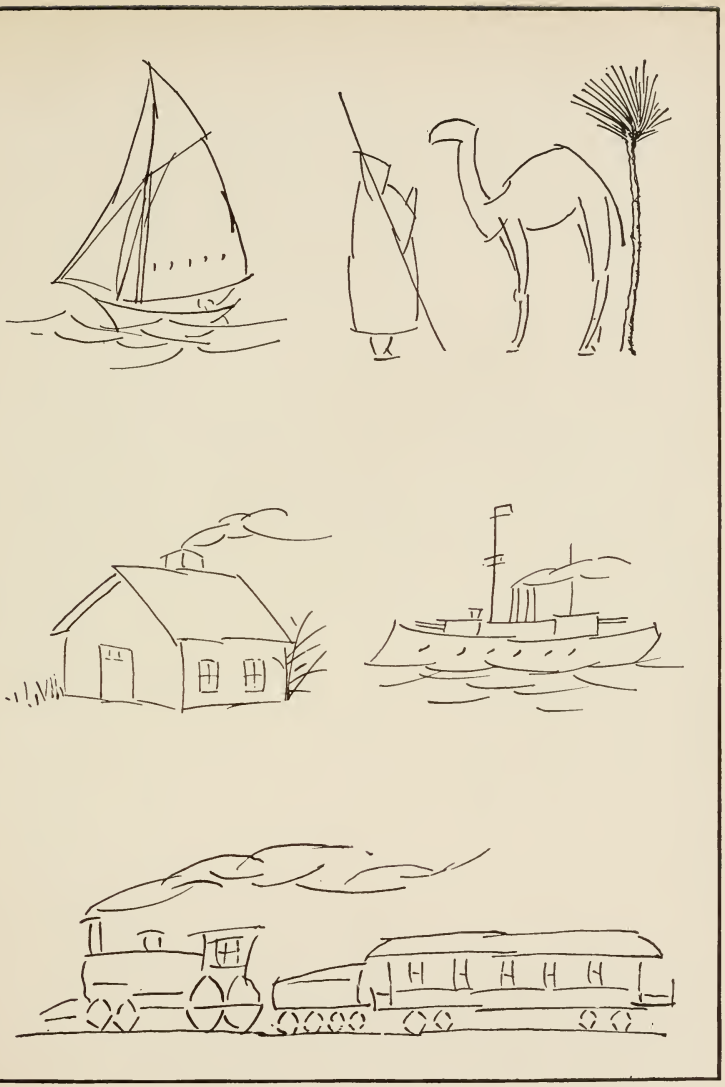
TWO families that are neighbors in town during the greater part of the year had been camping out all summer in a big pine grove, and the children had enjoyed every minute of it.

Each family had three big tents, and besides, there was a great outdoor oven built of stones, with a canvas shelter over it, where the cooking was done, and where, in the evenings, you could sit round a big, blazing camp-fire that cast wonderful shadows out into the dark woods. And all of them thought that the rude tents in which they slept were much cosier than rooms at home.

Between four big trees was stretched another piece of canvas for a roof, and underneath it stood a table large enough for all of the two families. Here they ate their meals, with the fresh air blowing through the tree-tops above their heads and squirrels chattering in the lowest branches.

The top of the big table was covered with a great smooth white oilcloth; and one rainy day, when there was nothing else to do, Henry and his Cousin Ethel got some half-burned sticks of soft wood from the fireplace and began to draw pictures on the table-cover. They were having a fine time when Uncle Hubert appeared.

"O-ho!" he cried. "That will never do! You must not make such a muss of that tablecloth! You get



Ethel began with a house; Henry was busy with a sailboat; and Uncle Hubert made a camel and its driver resting under a tree.

some soap and water and wash it all off, and then I'll show you how to make a new kind of pictures."

By the time the children had the tablecloth cleaned, Uncle Hubert was back again with a basketful of the "needles," or leaves, of the pine trees, which he had picked up from the ground. Each of the needles is like a slender line, but some are long and straight, and some are short and crooked, so that by picking out the kind you want, and laying them carefully on the table-cover, you can make any kind of a picture.

Ethel began with a house. It had a door and windows, and a chimney, with smoke coming out; and while she was doing that, Henry was busy making a sailboat, with all the sails set and the waves dancing. The waves were easy to make, for most of the pine-needles are curved just right.

But in the basket Uncle Hubert found a little pine twig that had a whole bunch of needles growing on it. When he laid that down on the table-cover it looked just like a palm tree; so he took some more needles, and in a little while had made a camel and a camel-driver resting under the tree.

That pleased Henry and Ethel so much that they teased their Uncle Hubert to make some more pictures.

It was good fun for all the children whenever it rained; and when they went back to town in the fall they brought a large bag of pine-needles, so they could play at the same game during the winter evenings. They have grown so skillful now that they sometimes

offer prizes for the one who can make the best picture with the fewest needles, and without breaking any of them. If you can find short ones in the bunch, it is all right; but the children say "it is no fair" to break them, although they had to do it when they made locomotives.

The Abandoned Well

THE Lewis children—Tom, Henry and little Bob—were spending Old Home Week on their grandfather's farm. There were woods, and wild pastures full of berries; there were two brooks, pigs and hens, the old horse that Bob loved to feed, swallows' nests in the barn with young birds in them, and many other things to fill the days with happiness.

But one day the boys did not know what to do with themselves. The men had finished haying, which had been a time of great excitement. Tom and Henry had done their share: Tom had driven the horse-rake after slow and gentle old Charlie, and Henry had used a hand-rake to clean up after him; and both of them had ridden on top of the great, swaying, jouncing load, and in the barn they had leaped from the big cross-beams over a dizzy distance to the soft, sweet-smelling beds of hay in the mows. Now that it was all over, they were trying to think what they should do next.

And then, when they were berrying in the north pasture, they found the old well. It had been dug years ago, to furnish water for the cattle; and although it was only ten feet deep, there had always been water in it. But when grandfather dug the big ditch to drain the land, the water had all leaked out.

Over the well stood a long, old-fashioned well-sweep,

made of a young tree with a fork at the upper end driven into the ground, to hold the great thirty-foot pole that carried the bucket hanging from one end, and held, in a sort of pocket made of wooden pins, a great stone that served as a weight.

In the grass and bushes beside the old well the boys found the bucket still hanging to its iron chain, and they found that by pulling down hard on the chain, they could send the bucket to the bottom. When they let go, the weight of the stone on the pole would bring it up again.

"Oh, I know what we'll do!" cried Tom. "We'll play that we are miners. I'll be the engineer that stays on top of the ground and runs the hoisting-engine, and you can be the miner, and I will let you down and draw up the buckets of coal that you dig."

At first Henry did not want to go down, but at last he said he would if Tom would promise to pull him up as soon as he wanted him to; and Tom promised.

With Tom holding the bucket steady, Henry climbed in and held tight to the chain, while Tom swung him carefully over the edge and began to let him down. But Tom had not thought about Henry being heavier than a bucket of water, and although he held on as hard as he could, the chain slipped through his fingers and hurt his hands, and for the last three feet the bucket went pretty fast, and struck the bottom with a bang that frightened both boys.

It happened that Henry was not hurt. Still, the fright

made him wish to come up at once, and Tom tried to raise him by pulling on the chain. He found that he could not lift him an inch, no matter how hard he tugged. Henry's weight was greater than that of the stone on the pole.

Both boys were now badly frightened, especially Henry, who began to cry. But Tom told him not to be afraid; he would get him out in a few minutes. And then he had a happy thought. The day before, when the tin-pedler had called at the farmhouse, the boys had watched him as he weighed a big bundle of rags on a steelyard; and Tom had noticed that, although the weight would not lift the rags at first, when it was near the centre, it did lift them as soon as the pedler moved it out near the end. He saw at once that the pole of the well-sweep was like the arm of the steelyard.

"I know! I know!" he shouted; and in an instant he had begun to climb the post that held the long pole. Slowly he worked his way up until he reached the fork, and then, wrapping his legs round the pole, he slid along toward the big stone.

In a little while he felt the pole move just a bit, and then it began to rise, and went on rising till the stone rested on the ground, and there, on the other end, was the bucket, hanging on the edge of the well, with Henry safe in it.

How carefully he held the pole down till he saw Henry work his way over the side of the bucket and stand once more on the good green grass! Then he slid

down, and the two boys hugged each other, and then went home.

There is an abandoned coal-mine on grandfather's farm that will probably never be worked, but grandfather does not know it.

In Lost Swamp

IN the summer Leonard Mitchell began to spend much time in the woods. His home was in a small village, back of which lay big, wild land that stretched away to the mountains.

There were several little streams in which trout could be caught, and one or two ponds where there were perch and pickerel and bass. Altogether, the country about Denridge, the village in which Leonard lived, was a fine place for a boy who loved the woods.

Leonard's father would not allow him to have a gun, because he thought he was not yet old enough; but he made for him what he called an arrow-rifle. It was of the same shape and size as a real rifle, only, instead of using cartridges, it had a strong rubber cord as thick as Leonard's little finger, and shot small arrows about a foot long. It shot so well that Leonard could knock an apple from a tree or a cent from the end of a split stick set up the width of the street away.

With his trusty arrow-rifle over his shoulder and a pail of luncheon in his hand, Leonard would start off early in the morning, right after breakfast, and stay until supper-time. Tramping the woods until he was tired, and finding new places to explore, he would sit down at noon under some shady tree by a spring of water and eat his luncheon. Then, after a long rest, he

would spend a part of the afternoon in picking berries, so that he usually went home with a full pail.

One day, while he was eating his luncheon, he was startled by a sudden rush behind him. He turned quickly, to find a large dog by his side, and behind the dog a man with a gun on his shoulder.

The man smiled pleasantly, and said, "Are you looking for berries?"

"Yes, sir," answered Leonard.

"Well," said the man, "I have just tramped over through the woods from Lemmington, and just a little way back — not more than half a mile — I found a little swampy place full of high-bush blueberries. No one has ever gathered them. The bushes are so high that they are almost like trees. You can climb up into them; and the berries are as big as hazelnuts. There are bushels of them."

Here was exciting news! Blueberries were worth ten cents a quart. A bushel would come to more than three dollars!

Leonard began at once to hunt for the little swamp; but although he searched till nearly dark, he found no trace of it. That evening he went over to the house of his best friend, Ben Edgerly, and told him about it. Ben eagerly agreed to go partners and help hunt for the lost swamp.

Early the next morning they started, each with a big pail and a large package of luncheon. By going first to the spot where the strange man had come upon Leonard

the day before, and making that their starting-point, they were able to keep the direction better; and a little before ten o'clock they found the swamp.

What a sight it was! Never had either of the boys seen such bushes or such berries. All that the man had said was true.

Going off a little to one side, where the ground was higher and drier, they laid their luncheon and their coats under a tree, and then returning to the swamp, began to pick. The berries were so big that it was not work but play, and they piled up so fast that by noon each boy had his ten-quart pail nearly two-thirds full. But they were hungry then, and decided to leave the berries where they were.

What a surprise they had! Under the tree where they had left their luncheons were only scraps of torn and greasy paper. Not a bit of food could be found.

"Who do you suppose did it, Len?" asked Ben.

"Maybe it was that Joe Wilkins," said Leonard. "He saw us going off this morning. Perhaps he followed us."

It was hard to have no luncheon, but since it could not be helped, the boys decided to go back and finish filling their pails, and then go home. But they were to have another surprise. They found both pails tipped over and all the berries gone. It looked like a pretty mean trick; but neither Leonard nor Ben was a boy who would give up easily when he had once started to do a thing, so both of them picked up their pails and went doggedly to work to fill them again.

Picking as fast as they could, and moving on wherever the berries seemed to be thickest, the boys in a little while had worked some little way apart from each other, but without knowing it. Then Leonard, just as he reached a fine bush loaded with great rich, dark blueberries, heard a rustle and a sudden "Woof!" on the other side of it, and found himself looking right into the face of a half-grown bear!

For a moment he was too frightened to move, but he was not too frightened to yell. He gave one wild cry, "A bear, Ben, a bear!" at the top of his voice. At the sound the bear disappeared, and Leonard heard the wild rush he made as he dashed away through the bushes. Then Leonard, too, ran at the top of his speed, as he had never run before.

A minute later Ben joined him, and he also was running as if the bear were at his very heels; and neither boy stopped till the first houses of the village came in sight.

The next day a party of hunters, guided by Leonard and Ben, visited the little swamp. There, sure enough, they found plenty of traces of bears — tracks in the mud, as of an old bear and two young ones, and bushes bent down and stripped of their berries. It was plain enough where the boys' luncheons had gone and how their pails had been tipped over. But the bears themselves could not be found.

The next year Leonard was so much bigger that his father allowed him to have a real gun; and armed with

that, the two boys visited the swamp again, and for many years afterward, and gathered many bushels of berries, without ever being disturbed again by bears, or seeing any sign of them.

The Captives

MICE had been seen in the pantry, and that evening Harry and Ruth watched with much eagerness to see the trap baited and set.

It was not one of those little traps that shut down quickly and choke the mouse, but a big wire cage, which must seem to a mouse like a large, airy room. Father cut off a piece of cheese that was hard and would not break easily, and after toasting it a few minutes over the fire, fixed it firmly on the little wire hook that hung down from the roof of the cage. Then the big door at one end was fastened so that it would stay wide open. Any mouse that smelled that lovely toasted cheese could walk right in and help himself; but just as soon as he stood up on his hind legs and began to nibble at the cheese, bang! would go the door behind him, and he would find himself shut in tight.

The next morning Harry was the first one up. He waked Ruth, and together they crept quietly downstairs and to the pantry before Mary, the maid, was out of bed.

As they pushed open the pantry door, they saw something that made them both cry out in wonder. The door of the wire cage was closed, and inside was, not one mouse, but seven.

There was one big mouse, and cuddled close up to

her were six small mice children that had followed their mother into the cage. She had not even nibbled the cheese until they were all safely inside.

Strangest of all, the little family was curled up in a beautiful nest, made of bits of paper and small pieces of string and hairs and a few small rags, all nicely woven together into a little round bed, as soft and warm as anyone could wish.

Where could that nest have come from? When the trap was set the night before there had not been anything in it but the piece of cheese, that was now half-eaten. Not even the little baby mice could get out. Who could have brought in the things the nest was made of? The children could not tell. After breakfast Mr. Arnold said he was going to try to find out.

He first took the cage back to the pantry and set it down on the floor, just where it had been all night. He left the pantry door open a little way, and placing a chair outside, in the kitchen, he sat down where he could see the cage all the time; and he told Harry that if he would promise not to move once, or even to whisper, he could stay with him.

For a long time they saw nothing except the mother mouse and her babies in the trap. Then all at once a small gray shadow crept out from a corner and ran to the cage. It was another mouse; and in his mouth he carried a little rag.

When he reached the cage there was a great squealing. He stood up on his hind legs and pushed the rag

through the bars, and the mouse inside ran over to him and took the rag and ran back to her nest and patted the rag into place in the wall.

Three times he came. The second time he brought a little bit of cotton, and afterward a small piece of string and all those things the mother mouse took when he pushed them into the cage, and used them to make the nest warmer.

"Now, children," Mr. Arnold said, "what shall we do with this family of mice? We can't have them running round in the pantry, eating and spoiling our food."

"Oh, father, I know what I should like to do with them," said Harry. "I should like to take them away off somewhere, in the woods, and let them go."

And that was what they did. The cage was taken to a sunny place at the far end of the garden. There the door was opened and the children went away. When they came back, the cage was empty. Mrs. Mouse had moved her little family to the country.

On the Old Wharf

FOR a boy who lives most of the year away from the sea, the little town of Bayhead is a fine place to spend the summer. There is always something to do there. When it is pleasant, you can dig clams or go crabbing, or fish off the end of the old wharf. When it rains, you can go up into Captain Billy's sail-loft and watch him sew with a funny big thimble held in the palm of his hand; or you can sit in Captain Benny's shop and see him build boats while he tells stories.

To Walter Manly the rainy days were almost as happy as the pleasant ones, for he liked both Captain Billy and Captain Benny, and was always glad to be with them. The two old men were brothers. Both had been sailors all their lives, and for many years had hunted whales in the south seas. Captain Billy had only one leg, and had to use a crutch when he walked.

Walter had wondered a good many times how Captain Billy had lost his leg, but of course he did not like to ask him. But knowing that he and Captain Benny were brothers, he felt that he might ask Captain Benny. So one rainy day, when he and Thornton Hadley were in the boat-shop, he put the question.

"How did Captain Billy lose his leg?" the captain repeated after Walter. "Why, the bight of a rope took it off."

"The bite of a rope!" cried Walter. "How could a rope bite a man's leg off? I guess you are making fun of me, captain."

"No, no, my boy. It was the bight of a rope, but not the kind you are thinking of."

"But what is it?" asked the boys.

"A bight is a loop, and it is a thing a sailor is always afraid of, and a whaler, especially."

And then the captain took a rope and showed them what he meant. He told them about hunting whales: how the small boats leave the ship, and the men row quietly up to the whale until they are near enough for the man in the bow to throw the harpoon into the whale. He showed them a harpoon, which is a short iron spear with a long, fine rope fastened to it; and he told them how careful the men must be to see that the rope is coiled just right in the tub at the bow of the boat, because when the whale feels the harpoon, he usually dives and goes down so fast that the rope sometimes makes the edge of the tub smoke. If the rope is not coiled just right, it may catch when it runs out, and the whole boat be dragged under the water. And if a man happens to get his foot or his leg caught in a loop of the rope, he may be pulled overboard, or his leg cut off.

That was what had happened to Captain Billy. A careless sailor had let the rope get kinked, and a loop had caught round Captain Billy's leg and pulled him over.

He was carried down, down, down, and might never have come up if Captain Benny, who was in the same boat, had not grabbed a hatchet and cut the rope. Captain Billy rose to the top of the water at last, and the men got him into the boat; but his leg was so badly cut that it had to be taken off.

Both Walter and Thornton thought they would remember the captain's story; but a week later, when they were fishing from the end of the old wharf, something happened that made them forget.

They were fishing for flounders with Ned Pierce, who lives all the year in Bayhead. The captain had helped them bait their hooks, and was watching them, when Walter suddenly had a great tug on his line — so hard that he nearly lost his hold on it. When he pulled, the head of a big fish came to the top of the water. "Oh, what is it? What is it?" cried the boys.

"It's a dogfish!" shouted the captain. "Hold hard, now! There must be a school of them."

Walter had been lying flat on the wharf, but in his eagerness to land his big fish, he stood up and stepped nearer the edge, and gave a hard pull. The pull must have sunk the hook deeper in the fish's mouth, for he, too, gave a great pull to get away. Walter stepped ahead one step more, without seeing where he put his foot. The next moment he felt himself falling. Something had pulled his right leg out from under him, and in another instant he went with a great splash into the water.

The next he knew his head was just above the water, while something sharp and cold was gripping him through his clothes, between the shoulders. It was the captain's boat-hook, and by the long pole which made the handle of it the captain was holding him up. Ned and Thornton ran down the steps and pushed out in a boat, and in a few minutes had him on board, a good deal frightened.

"There, my boy," said Captain Benny, when Walter was safe on land again, "you see now what I meant when I told you to look out for the bight of a line. You stepped in the bight of your fish-line, and your fish pulled you off your feet. If it had been a whale, we should not have got you so easily. Next time you must be more careful with your line."

Uncle Dan's Bear Story

"WELL," said Uncle Dan, when the children teased for a story, "since you all want something different, I think I shall have to decide myself. How would you like to have me tell you about a bear that has frightened more people than any other in the world, and that frightened me lots and lots of times?"

"O-o-o-o! Goody!" cried all of them together.

"It's about a grizzly bear," said Lyman.

"No, a polar bear," guessed Lizzie.

"I think it's a cinnamon bear," declared Bob.

Uncle Dan laughed. "No," he said, "it is n't any one of those bears. It's a kind of bear you never heard of — a bear that has very strange habits, and is different from any other bear in the world.

"In the first place, this bear is found all over the country, not only in wild places in the woods and mountains, but even more often near log houses and little villages, and especially about old pastures where you go to drive the cows in the morning and to get them again at night.

"The strangest thing about this kind of bear is that you never see him in the daytime or in the morning, but only when it has begun to get dark a little at evening, and on nights when there is just a tiny bit of moon.

"When I was a boy, I had to take my father's cows to pasture every morning and go after them every night. I never met one of these bears in the morning, but sometimes I would see three or four in a single evening, and they would frighten me so that I would run all the way home."

"Did they chase you, Uncle Dan, or did you shoot them, or scare them away?"

"No, dear, I don't think any of them ever chased me, though I ran too hard to see; and I am sure I never shot one, partly because I had no gun with me then, and partly because this kind of a bear is so hard and tough that a bullet does n't hurt him at all; nor can you scare him away. He will not run from anybody, no matter how much you shout or how loud a noise your gun makes. He just stays right there."

"How big are they, and what color?" asked Lyman, whose eyes were round with interest and excitement.

"They are of all sizes," said Uncle Dan; "sometimes not any larger than a Newfoundland dog, sometimes as tall as a big man; but they are always dark-colored, almost black, and they are always standing very still. The place where you are most likely to see them is in the shadows near trees, and in fence-corners, and along the edges of old pastures."

"Well, but, Uncle Dan," began Rob, eagerly, "if you can't shoot them and can't drive them away, what can you do with that kind of bears? Do you always have to run away from them? I think that is cowardly."

"No, my boy," answered Uncle Dan, with a smile, "there is another way. If you are brave enough to go right up to one of these bears and touch him with your hand, he will never hurt you, but will disappear at once — so quickly that you can't see him go. That is the only thing to do, but I did n't find it out for a long time — until I was almost grown up."

"But what is this strange bear?" asked Lizzie, with a puzzled look on her face. "What is the name of it?"

"Why, they call it the stump bear," answered Uncle Dan; "and, as I said, he has frightened more persons, especially small boys and girls, than any other kind of animal." And Uncle Dan laughed.

For a second the children did not know what to think. Then Lizzie burst into a joyous laugh. "I know what it is!" she cried. "It is n't a bear at all! It's just an old stump that you think is a bear, like that one near the spring, up at grandpa's!"

"Yes," admitted Uncle Dan, "that is what I meant. I knew you had seen them, too!"

A Pioneer's Thanksgiving

WHEN Thanksgiving comes round, the Lowden family always come together in the old homestead, where Grandfather and Grandmother Lowden still live. It is a large family, with many sons and daughters, and grandsons and granddaughters, too; and it is widely scattered. Some of the members live in cities, some in the country; but wherever they are, when the great day comes, they go back to the old farm. And when they have eaten the big dinner, all except the nuts and raisins, some one of the children is sure to say, "Now, grandfather, the story!" And grandfather laughs, and says, "Pooh! You have all heard that story till you know it by heart." But they say no. They have forgotten just how it happened, or they do not remember what it was that the Indian did; and so at last grandfather says, "Well, if you must have it, here it is"; and then he tells this story.

"I was a boy then, twelve years old, and my sister Ellen was only fourteen. Father had come into the wilderness and started to clear this farm when I was three years old. He had built a log house and a log stable, and had cleared enough land to raise good crops of wheat, corn, potatoes, and other vegetables. Neighbors had taken up land below us, and there was one family above, but the nearest house was a mile away. The

log cabin that we lived in stood right where this house stands. Father put it here because of the fine spring of water.

"We had had a good summer that year, and the little hole under the house that we called a cellar was full of vegetables and the stable packed with grain. From the beams of the kitchen hung hams and bacon from our own hogs, and long strips of pumpkin were drying. By Thanksgiving time everything was ready for the winter, even to the great banking of dry leaves round the house, to keep it warm.

"The day before Thanksgiving mother had been making soap in the great iron kettle hung over a fire outdoors. In the middle of the night we were all awakened by the barking of old Ben, our dog; and when I sat up in bed, I saw that the room was as light as day. For a moment I could n't tell what the matter was, but it did n't take long to see that the house was on fire. One end was already burning fiercely, and the blaze was leaping higher every minute. It had started outside. Probably the embers of the soap-making fire had come to life in the night wind, and blown into the banking of leaves.

"Father had just time to snatch blankets from the beds and wrap them round my mother and my sister and me, and hurry us out into the cold night. It was useless to try to save the house. The only water was that in the spring, and there were only two or three pails to carry it in. We did what we could, but the fire

soon drove us back, and in a little while the house was only a pile of glowing coals.

"We had been so busy watching and fighting the fire that we had given no thought to the stable, which was behind us; but by and by I heard a crackling, and looked, and saw the roof all ablaze. Father and I got out the two horses and the cow, but the building we could not save. And so, on Thanksgiving morning, we stood, wrapped in blankets, with neither a roof over our heads nor any food. My mother and my sister were crying, but my father spoke only once, and said, 'The Lord will provide.'

"It was just getting light enough in the morning to see, when out of the woods behind the spot where the house had stood, a figure came. I could not see who it was, except that it was a man, and that he had something on his back. He walked straight up to where we stood, and threw down in front of us the load he was carrying.

"Then we saw that it was old Sebattis, an Indian whom father had found lying with a broken leg beside the trail a year or two before. He had brought him home and set the leg, and kept him till he was able to travel again. The load that he had thrown down was a hind quarter of venison and six partridges and about a peck of parched corn in a little sack. While we all stared at him, the old man straightened up, and said, 'How! Sebattis see fire and know, so he come. By and by come again.' Then he turned and went back into the woods.

"That was the finest Thanksgiving that I ever remember, and the best dinner. We cut slices from the venison and broiled them over a fire built against the big rock out here in the yard. The partridges father rolled in soft clay, till the clay covered them all over, and then baked them in the ashes. When he raked them out and cracked open the balls of clay, each one contained a bird that was cooked as tender and juicy as any that your grandmother can cook in the oven of the range. The parched corn we ate for dessert.

"All those things I remember, but best of all I remember what father said when we sat down to eat. He told us what the day meant, and how thankful we should be. And then he made a prayer of thanksgiving that was the most beautiful that I ever heard.

"The Lord did provide, as father said He would. Neighbors came from far and near, — some of them fifteen miles, — and before the snow flew they had helped us put up another log cabin, and had filled it with provisions; and the next year father built this house."

Pedro's Wooden Leg

ALTHOUGH it was a bright, sunny afternoon, and vacation-time, Johnnie Coleman looked very unhappy as he leaned against the orchard wall. He wanted to be out with the other boys, who were playing ball on the corner, but his mother had asked him to wait and take his sister Ruth out in the baby-carriage.

There were some smooth, round stones beside the wall, and to show how badly he felt, Johnnie began to throw them at a basket Hiram had left hanging on the Baldwin tree. Just then Pedro, Johnnie's pet rooster, flew up on the wall. Pedro was very white, and against the dark shade of the apple trees he made a fine mark.

"Guess I'll see if I can make him jump," said Johnnie to himself. With that, he let fly the stone he had in his hand, and the next thing he knew, Pedro fell over with a great flapping of wings, and squawked so loud that Mrs. Coleman came out to see what was the matter.

With terror in his heart Johnnie ran along by the wall. As he drew near, he saw that Pedro could not stand up. One of his legs hung limp and helpless, and there was an ugly hole where a little blood had already begun to show.

Johnnie gathered the chicken up in his arms and ran to the house. "Will he die?" he asked anxiously of his

mother. "See, his leg is all wobbly, and he can't stand up!"

"I cannot tell, my dear, whether he will die or not," said his mother. "He is badly hurt. I did not think my son could be so cruel."

"But I did n't mean to hit him, mother! Honest, I did n't!" protested Johnnie. "Could n't a doctor cure him?"

"Perhaps so. You had better ask Dr. Williams."

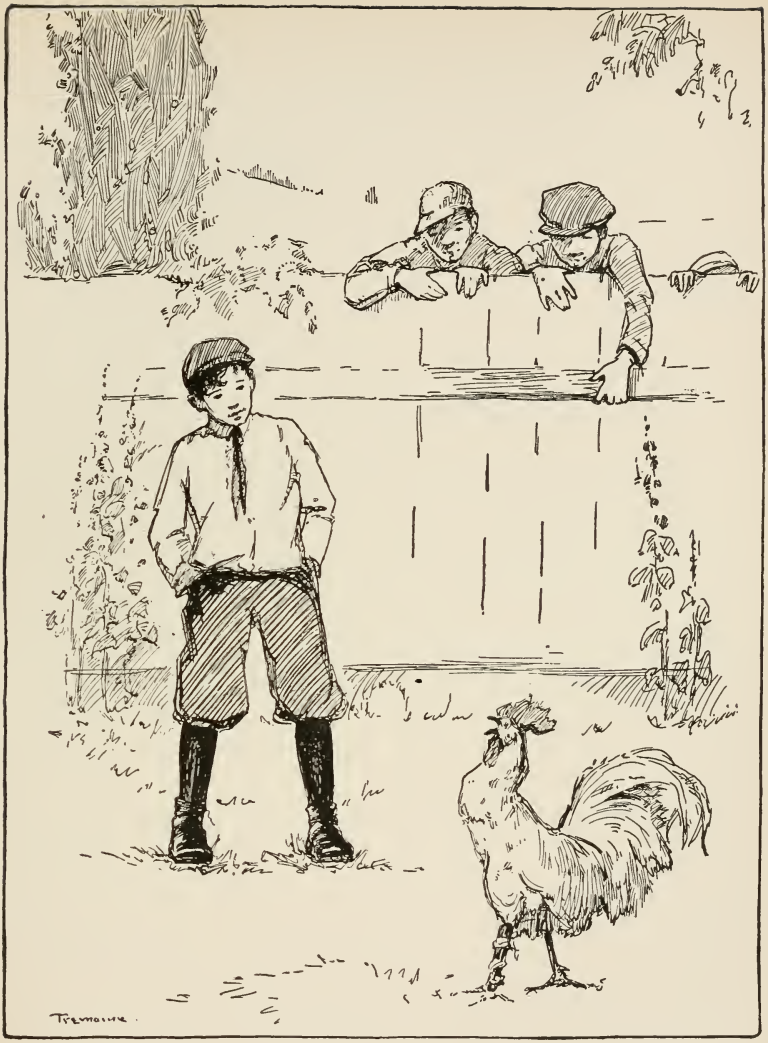
The doctor looked very grave when Johnnie appeared with Pedro in his arms. He wiggled the broken leg back and forth, and said, "Large, contused wound and fracture of the tibia. Pretty serious case. Did you wish me to operate?"

"Oh, yes, sir, please, if you can!" said Johnnie.

The doctor went into another room and very soon returned with a new shingle. From it he split some long pieces which he shaved thin and smooth with his knife. While Johnnie held Pedro, the doctor washed the broken leg and set the ends of the broken bone together. He placed a bandage over the place where the stone had hit, and put the strips of shingle, which he called splints, all about the broken leg. Then he wrapped the whole with strong tape to keep the splints in place.

When he set Pedro down on the floor, Johnnie was delighted to see that the rooster could stand as well as ever.

During the next two weeks Johnnie and all his friends spent much time watching "the rooster with the wooden



During the next two weeks Johnnie and all his friends spent much time watching the rooster with the wooden leg.

leg." Pedro stumped about the yard as if nothing had happened. He limped a little at first, and sometimes fell over if he started suddenly to run; but when Johnnie called him, he came stumping along as fast as he could, just as he used to before he was hurt; and Johnnie was glad of that, because, he said, it made him feel that Pedro had forgiven him.

When the time came, Johnnie took off the bandages and splints, as the doctor had told him to do. The leg was all well, and only a small scar remained. Johnnie felt so happy then that he thought for a moment of throwing a large stone at Mrs. Dana's cat, which was asleep under the cherry tree in the next yard.

But a few days later the postman brought Johnnie a letter. It contained a slip of paper, which read like this:

Master John Coleman,
To Dr. Charles F. Williams, Dr.
To Professional Services . . . $3.00

"What does it mean, mother?" asked Johnnie.

"Why, it means that you owe Doctor Williams three dollars," she said, "and this is the polite way of asking you to pay him."

"But how can I pay him when I have n't any money?" said Johnnie.

"But, my dear boy, you asked him to set Pedro's leg for you, and of course a gentleman would not ask another person to work for him unless he intended to pay him. You must ask papa about it."

Johnnie's father told him the same thing, nor did he offer to give Johnnie the three dollars. But after a little while he said that he had been thinking of hiring a boy to rake up the dead leaves and to help Hiram gather the early apples. He should be willing to pay a boy twenty-five cents a day for such work.

"Can't I do it? Will you pay me twenty-five cents a day if I do it?" asked Johnnie, eagerly.

And his father said yes.

It took two long weeks to earn the three dollars, and every day Johnnie could hear the boys laughing and shouting down at the corner.

But when finally the last twenty-five cent pieces had been earned and paid over to the doctor, instead of going at once to play with the boys, as he had meant to, Johnnie sat down on the doorstep and thought a long time.

"Old Mustard"

WHEN Grandmother Lane was a little girl, her father came in one day and said, "Wife, it is all settled at last. I have sold the farm. Next week we will start West. There is a large company going from here, and we must try to get ready to go with them."

Little Mary, as grandmother was then called, heard the news with great delight, because she knew it would mean a long, long journey, lasting months, and carrying them into a new country, where there was never any cold weather, and where great crops could be raised without much hard work, and there would always be plenty to eat. Besides, her family was not going alone, but many other families whom they knew were going at the same time, so that she would have some of her playmates with her all the way.

It was a wonderful sight when the great day came at last, and the long wagon-train set out. In all there were more than forty wagons, some drawn by four or six horses, and some by as many as eight big oxen. And such strange wagons! They were more like little houses on wheels, only instead of a roof there was a high frame overhead made of hoops, and covered with canvas, so that it made a sort of tent to ride in by day, if you wished, and to sleep in at night. And from the hoops

hung all sorts of things — hams and pieces of bacon, strips of dried pumpkin, pans to cook in, and clothes. Underneath the big wagon, outside, swung the great kettles, in which the larger things were cooked, and axes, and ropes and chains for pulling the wagons out when they got stuck in the mud.

To little Mary it was all new and delightful. The big wagons squeaked and groaned and swayed from side to side till the hams hanging from the frame overhead would swing back and forth like the pendulum of a clock. There were the shouts of the men to the horses and oxen, the barking of the dogs that ran along the side of the trail, the sharp cracking of the drivers' whips, and the *ting-tang* of the iron kettles swinging against one another. And always they were passing through places that were new and seeing things that were fresh and strange.

The wagon of Mr. Harding — that was grandmother's father — was drawn by four oxen, but one of them, known as Jerry, began to show signs of sickness when they had been on the road a few days. The men gave him medicine and doctored him all they could, but he seemed to grow weaker all the time instead of better, and one morning, when they went to yoke the oxen to the wagon, they found him dead.

For a day or two they went on with only three oxen. Then Mr. Harding met a trader who was willing to sell him a pet ox that he called "Old Mustard," to take the place of Jerry.

It was a very funny-looking ox, indeed, not like any that Mary or anybody in her family had ever seen before. He had a very large, round head, with shaggy hair matted on top, and on his back was a large hump. In color he was a dirty yellow all over. That is why the trader called him Mustard.

"He is n't very pretty," said the trader, "but he is strong and good-natured, and will pull more than any ox of his size that I ever saw. Besides, he will get on with less grass and less water. He is half-buffalo — he shows it in his head and shoulders. For that reason he will be worth more to you than any scout or watch-dog; he can smell Indians a mile away, and will fight them at sight."

Mr. Harding did not quite like to buy so strange an animal, but he must get another ox somewhere, and so he took Old Mustard.

By the end of the first day he was very glad he had done so, for the funny-looking yellow creature took its place at the tongue of the cart and pulled steadily and well. And every day after that Old Mustard worked faithfully, and seemed never to be sick or to feel tired.

By the end of the fourth week the wagon-train had entered a country where the Indians were known to be on the war-path, and trouble was expected. They even found the remains of three partly burned wagons.

Great care was now taken to send scouts ahead during the day and to prepare the camp for defense at night.

The first thing that was done as soon as the stop was made for the night was to "park" all the wagons, as

they called it. The big ox-carts were placed in a great circle and chained one to another. Sometimes the cattle were picketed outside, to graze, with men armed with guns to watch them, and sometimes they were driven inside. But always the camp-fires were built in the circle, and round them the different families gathered to cook and eat their supper.

One night, when the wagons had been parked and everyone had eaten supper and gone to sleep, Old Mustard began to act very strangely. At first he tossed his head and blew hard through his nostrils; then he began to move about uneasily as far as his rope would let him, and to snort and paw the ground. When one of the guards went near him, he turned upon him a pair of eyes that were bright green and shiny.

At last Mr. Harding happened to think what the trader had told him.

"Do you suppose it can be that he scents Indians?" he asked one of the other men.

"It may be," he said. "It is sure that he is excited over something. Perhaps we had better be on the safe side and wake the men."

Quietly Mr. Harding went from wagon to wagon, rousing the sleepers. He had hardly finished when Old Mustard, with a terrible roar, snapped the rope that held him, dashed to the edge of the circle, leaped a cart-tongue, and thundered away into the darkness. Almost instantly there came a scream and then the rushing charge of Indian riders.

They were met by the men of the party, now all prepared for them and protected by the circle of wagons. And finding that their attack had been discovered too soon, the Indians drew off after the first rush.

By the earliest flush of daylight a searching party went out from camp. It came upon Old Mustard grazing about, and not far away lay an Indian trampled into the dust. The Indian was the foremost of the band that was quietly creeping up on the camp when Old Mustard had scented them, and had not only given warning, but surprised and killed the leader.

A Good Lesson

AS Bessie sat playing with her doll on the shady piazza, there came a thump! thump! thump! on the walk that led up to the front door. Looking toward the gate, she saw a little old lady walking with a cane.

The old lady climbed the steps to the screen door, but before she could open it, she had to set down a little basket that she carried in one hand. Then she held the door open with her cane, and picked up the basket and passed in.

Bessie went on playing with her doll, and in a moment her mother, too, came up the steps, for she had been in the garden.

The old lady was a great friend of Bessie's grandmother. She had brought a basket of cherries, and she and Bessie and Bessie's mother all had tea together on the piazza. When the friend rose to go, Bessie sat looking at her, and made no move to open the door for her, but let her mother do it.

When she had gone, Bessie's mother said, rather sadly, "I am sorry my little girl is so rude. I thought she had better manners."

"Why, mother, I did n't do anything impolite, did I? I did n't do anything at all."

"No, my dear. That is the trouble. You did n't do

And then the little girl made a curtsey and said, "I only wish sir, that it was to let you in."

anything when you should have done much. More than a hundred years ago there was a little girl in the South about your age. She had the same kind of a chance to be polite that you had just now, and she did such a pretty thing, and did it so well, that she has been remembered for it ever since, and people in the South still tell about it, although even the little girl's name has been forgotten."

"Oh, tell me about her!" cried Bessie.

"Well, it is a very short story. She was the daughter of a lady who was a great friend of General George Washington, and one day she was in the room with her mother when the general called. She sat there till he rose to go; then she got up and held the door open for him to pass out. As he reached the door, he bowed to her, and said, 'My dear, I am sorry to make you so much trouble.'

"And then the little girl made a curtsey, — a stiff little bow that every child of that time learned to make, — and said, 'I only wish, sir, that it was to let you in.'

"It was a lovely speech for any child to make, but the feeling that made her say it was lovelier still."

How Grant Earned His Calf

GRANT NORCROSS had come with his father and mother to spend a month in Tilton on his grandfather's farm.

Strange sounds met his ears on the first morning. The roosters waked him. From the edge of the woods a crow was calling, and somewhere near the barn a cow was bellowing at the top of her voice. Close under the window was still another noise that Grant could not quite make out until he got up. Then he saw that on the other side of the orchard wall there was a calf tied to an iron stake driven into the ground. Every time the cow called, the calf tried to answer. What the cow said was hard to understand, but what the calf said was, "Ma-a, when will breakfast be ready?"

Grant hurried down to the yard to see his grandfather feed the stock. His two cousins, boys about his own age, were already up and busy at the milking.

"Why does the cow keep making such a noise?" asked Grant.

"Because I've just taken her calf away from her," his grandfather answered. "We have got to teach the calf to drink."

"Can't I do it?"

His two cousins, George and Frank, laughed, and even his grandfather smiled. "I'm afraid you would n't

find it a very easy job, or a very pleasant one, at first," he answered. "It takes a great deal of patience and not a little grit."

"But I can be patient, and I know I've got grit. Do let me try, grandfather."

The old man turned a kindly eye on Grant's eager face. There was something about it that he liked — a good, clean chin and a well-shaped mouth. "Well," he said, at length, "I'll tell you what I will do. If you can teach the calf to drink without beating her or losing control of your temper, I will give her to you for your own, to keep or to sell, or do anything else with that you please."

Grant rushed joyfully into the house and asked his grandmother to tell him what to do. The next morning he got a milk-pail, put about two quarts of milk into it, and started for the barn-yard.

"You had better put on an old apron!" his grandmother called; but that seemed too girlish, and Grant kept on as if he had not heard.

The calf braced her feet stubbornly when he tried to get her into the orchard. He set the pail down, and called, "So, Boss! Here, Boss!" as he had heard his cousins do. But the calf did not move.

Grant crept nearer. His grandmother had told him not to be afraid; that a calf was a gentle little creature that would not bite, and could not hook, since she had no horns. When he was within reach, he put the pail under the calf's nose, dipped his finger in the milk, and

placed it in the calf's mouth. He was half-afraid that she would bite, after all.

But the calf did not bite. For a moment she did nothing but hold Grant's finger. She stood with all four feet spread wide apart, and her tail stood out straight like a ramrod. Then the tail kinked up, the fore legs moved back, and with a glad leap, the calf thrust half of her head into the pail.

The head came out white to the eyes with milk. Then, looking Grant square in the face, the calf blew a mighty "Whoosh!" that completely spattered him from head to foot.

Grant set the pail down to wipe the milk out of his eyes, and hearing a low laugh, turned, and saw that the whole family were watching him.

He dipped his finger again into the milk, and held it toward the calf's mouth. This time it was the calf's hind legs that moved. They went up into the air, and her head went down, but only far enough to hit Grant fair in the pit of the stomach and knock him flat on his back, with the milk-pail on top.

When Grant went back to the house, his grandfather, still laughing, said, "Well, my boy, going to give it up?"

"No, sir," said Grant. "I came after some more milk."

It was not that day or the next, or even the first or the second week, that Grant earned his calf. It took a long time and cost much hard work. One day the calf stepped in the pail, and sent all the milk splashing over Grant's

feet and legs. Sometimes she would slap him across the face with her tail, sometimes try to swallow his whole hand, and at other times run round him two or three times, until the chain bound both of them tight to the iron stake.

Then one day the calf began to drink as soon as he put the pail under her nose, and there was no more trouble.

When he told his grandfather, the old gentleman said, "Well, Grant, you have earned your calf. But you have done something a great deal bigger."

"Why, grandpa, what do you mean?"

"'He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city,'" his grandfather answered.

Johnnie's Bright Idea

TO each of the three Lawrence boys Santa Claus had brought a sled — to Joe a little one, to Frank a middle-sized one, and to Henry a big one. He had been good to the two Morrill boys also, for he had brought sleds to both Charlie and Edward. But he had forgotten to send any snow to go with the sleds. For weeks the ground had been bare, and of course you cannot do much with a sled on bare ground.

Every day the boys looked out of the window as soon as they got up, but never a patch of white did they see; until at last, one Friday morning, when the wind had been howling all night, the boys looked out and saw nothing but snow. There was a steady "tickle-tackle" as the hard flakes struck the window panes and bounded off. The roofs were like the sides of snow-covered mountains; and as for the yard and the road outside, you could not see them. But when Saturday morning came the sun was shining.

By nine o'clock every one of the new sleds was out. Some time before daylight the men had gone by with the snow-plough. The sidewalks were ditches, with high white walls on both sides. The road was another ditch, with mountains of snow between it and the sidewalks. It was just what the boys had been hoping for.

Tyler Street, where they usually coasted, was too

short, and that was what made them think of Sargent's hill.

Sargent's hill is almost as steep as Tyler Street, and nearly three times as long, and most of the time no better coasting place can be found; but just before the cold weather set in, the men had come and dug a big ditch across the lower end of it, and thrown the dirt up in a great wall. Then the ground froze so hard that they could not work any longer, and they had left both the ditch and the wall; and beyond them no sled could pass. The boys did not know about that until they went over there, and even then they did not think much about it.

And so they started — Charlie Morrill first; and after him came his brother Edward, and then the Lawrence boys, Johnnie Otis, and all the others. Down they went in a long line, faster and faster, until the tears came into their eyes, and they could hardly see to steer.

When Charlie Morrill saw the high wall of snow in front of him, he put his feet down hard, and tried to stop; but he was going faster than he thought, and before he could bring the sled to a standstill, he was on top of the wall, and had almost fallen over into the ditch. The others had the same trouble, and two of them were going so fast that they buried their heads in the snow, and had to roll off the sleds to keep from going over.

The next time it was just as bad, and the next time after that; for the more sleds went down, the smoother they wore the track, the faster they went, and the harder it became to stop.

It was then that Johnnie Otis had his bright idea.

"I tell you what we'll do," he said. "We'll all go home and get clothes-lines. Then we can measure the hill from the top to the bottom, and tie a sled to a line just as long as the hill. Then we can't help stopping before we get to the snowbank."

"That's great!" cried the boys, and five of them started for their homes. In a little while they were all back again, each with his mother's clothes-line. Johnnie and Fred Hunt tied three of the lines together, and went down to the foot of the hill and held one end. The other boys pulled the rope tight, and tied the end of it to a lamp-post at the top of the hill. Then they began to haul it in and to coil it in a circle on the snow at one side of the track. When Johnnie and Fred came back, they fastened the other end of the rope to the biggest sled, and three of the boys got on it and started.

Faster and faster they went. They knew that the rope was shorter than the hill, and would stop the sled before it reached the snowbank, and so of course they did not put their feet down to stop it.

The boys at the top were watching. In front of them the rope ran out of the coil like an endless snake. The sled, slipping down the long hill, grew smaller and smaller; then, as they looked, they saw it suddenly stop, and above it three figures sailed through the air, like frogs diving for deep water. Over the top of the bank they disappeared in a cloud of snow, but the sled stopped where it was.

When the other boys reached the foot of the hill, the three who had gone down were sitting digging the snow from their ears and the backs of their necks.

When the other boys reached the foot of the hill, the three who had gone down were sitting on the top of the bank, digging the snow from their ears and the backs of their necks.

"What was the matter, Johnnie?" asked one of the boys.

"Nothing," said Johnnie, sheepishly. "Only I should have tied the rope to my leg instead of to the sled."

The Little Red Workers

PAUL HOWE, with his sister Dorothy and their father, was standing by the railway crossing, waiting for a train to go by. The gates were down, and from away up the track they could hear a rattle and rumble that told them something was coming. They wondered whether it would be a long, slow freight train or a short, quick passenger train. But round the curve came something that the children had never seen before — a little car, just big enough to hold two men, whose backs were moving up and down, up and down, as if they were bowing to each other. As the car went by, the children saw that between the two men was a bar that first one pushed and then the other; and that, as it went down on one side, it went up on the other, and that that was what made the car go.

"It must be great fun!" said Paul.

But Dorothy thought that instead of being fun, it must be hard work.

"It is both work and fun," said their father, "for the right kind of work is the best fun in the world." And he told them that the men, going up and down the track every day, were all the time watching to see that there were no broken rails or loose ties, and that thus they helped to guard against train wrecks.

"It is a good work," he added, "and hard, but not so

hard as that of the little red men who help to keep the time of the world."

The children had never heard of those little red men, and so, after dinner, their father told them the story.

"A long time ago," he said, "there were wise men who were trying to build a factory to make time for all the people. After a great deal of thought and work, they did it. It was such a little factory that anyone could carry it round in his pocket; and when he wanted to know what time it was, all he had to do was to look in at the factory window.

"They made wheels and chains and pulleys for the factory, that would work day and night, year in and year out, and never stop or get tired. But there was one place in the factory that they found it hard to fill. They wanted two men to move a big wheel back and forth, without ever stopping. Of course, it was very hard work, but the wise men said, 'Brass is hard and strong, and we will try men of brass.'

"The men of brass worked as well as they could, but it was too hard for them, and sooner or later they grew tired and wore out, and the wise men had to get someone to take their place.

"'Steel is stronger and harder than brass,' they said, and so they tried men of steel; but they found in time that even they could not do the work, but had to stop.

"And then came the little red men. They had always lived all by themselves, deep in the ground in India; and because they belonged to a very great and rich

family, had never in their lives done any work. But now, when they learned what the wise men needed, they came forth and offered themselves, and said, 'Try us. We are stronger than brass and harder than steel, and we never tire or wear out.'

"And so the wise men took them and tried them, and set them at work in the factory.

"It was more than a hundred years ago that they began to work there, but they are working still, and show no signs of being tired. And during all that time they have never stopped or rested; but night and day, through all those years, they have pushed the big wheel back and forth five times a second. They never sleep, and they eat nothing except a little oil; and that they get only once in a year and a half or two years. Up and down, and up and down, and up and down, the little red backs bob; and back and forth, and back and forth, the big wheel spins. And the two little red men must work always together, and always just so fast, and no faster. One of the little red men is named Ruby, and the other is named Sapphire. If you listen at the factory-door, you can hear them at their work. And because they are always working, we can always tell what time it is."

And then he took his watch from his pocket, and held it to the children's ears; and they heard the busy workers. And when he opened the case, they looked in, and saw the red backs bobbing up and down.

The Dog that Danced

IT was Saturday, and so, of course, there was no school. All the week the ice on the ponds had been growing thicker and thicker, to the great joy of the Conway boys, James and Arthur, and their friend George Arnold; for their fathers had told them that, if the ice was strong enough by Saturday, they might skate down across Long Pond and go through the pass to Big Island Lake.

It was found that the ice was thick enough, so about ten o'clock they started. Their mothers had put up luncheons for them, and the boys were going to build a fire on the ice, near the shore, to keep warm while they ate, and perhaps cook some bacon by sticking the slices in the ends of split sticks, and holding them over the fire.

The ice was so clear that the boys, by putting their faces down close to it, could look through it as they could through a pane of glass, and see things on the bottom, near the shore, and dead leaves moving slowly along toward the outlet. Once George saw a fish — a big pickerel, as long as his arm.

By the time they reached the foot of Long Pond it was nearly noon, and the boys were so hungry that they decided to have their luncheon at once. They wanted some dry wood to make the fire, so they all took off their skates and laid them down on the ice by the

boxes of luncheon. Then they went back a little way into the woods on the shore, for the sticks.

Each boy gathered a big armful — so big that it stuck away up in the air in front of him and almost kept him from seeing where he was going. But they pushed their way through the bushes to the ice again, and dropped the wood in a pile for their fire.

Just then they heard a crackling in the bushes. They turned and saw a big, funny-looking dog coming out. He was shaggy, and a kind of dirty brown in color; and he had small eyes, very black, that twinkled, and a sharp nose that kept quivering and wrinkling up.

When he saw the boys, he stopped a moment, and put his nose up in the air and sniffed. Then he walked slowly out on the ice toward the boys' luncheon. His walk was ungainly.

"What a big dog he is!" said James; and indeed he was — bigger than any the boys had ever seen before.

"And what a funny walk he has!" said George.

Then the other boys noticed it, too — a kind of roly-poly, waddling walk, as if he were made of jelly, all shaky. They had never seen a dog walk like that before.

The dog did not pay any attention to the boys, but kept right on toward the lunch-boxes they had left on the ice. He did not seem to be cross, and they went a few steps toward him, and shouted and shook sticks at him, which they took from the pile of wood. Then he growled, but kept right on toward the luncheon.

"Throw your stick at him," said James to Arthur. "Perhaps that will scare him."

Arthur threw the stick, but as it whirled through the air, the big dog suddenly stood up on his hind legs and caught the stick in one of his paws, just as a boy will catch a baseball bat that another boy tosses to him. Then the boys were astonished and terrified to see him begin to dance on his hind legs, moving in a circle, balancing the stick, swinging his head up and down, and making a funny noise that was partly growl and partly as if he were trying to sing when he had a bad cold.

"It's a bear! It's a bear!" cried George and Arthur together; and getting James by the hand, they all three started to run.

Now every boy knows how hard it is to run on ice without skates. You keep slipping and sliding, and you cannot turn quickly at all. Before the boys could reach the shore, the bear, moving in a circle, had got between them and the land, and in trying to turn, James slipped and slid right ahead, toward the bear. He set up a great cry, but George and Arthur did not let go of him, although they, too, were very much frightened.

Then, all at once, there came a great shouting and crashing in the bushes, and out popped a little man with high boots and a red flannel shirt and a fur cap. His eyes were big and black, and his hair curly, and in his ears he had little rings of gold. He talked very loudly to the bear, and seemed to be scolding him, but the boys could not understand what he said. He walked right up to the bear and slapped him twice across the face with his hand. The bear whined, and began to

All at once, there came a great shouting and crashing in the bushes, and out popped a little man who talked very loudly to the bear and seemed to be scolding him.

dance all the faster. Then the little man took a big collar from his pocket and strapped it round the bear's neck, and began to lead him away by a rope. Just before he went he turned to the boys and said, with a smile that showed his white teeth, "Bad Beppo! Run away. No like dance. Get cold, get seek."

The Star in the Grass

IN a sunny opening in the woods a little group of children were gathering wild flowers, when one of them heard a rustling in the leaves behind him, and, turning quickly, saw an old man standing there.

He was a strange-looking old man, and strangely dressed. On his head was a wide-brimmed soft hat of black, with a black and gold cord about it that ended in two small tassels hanging over the edge in front. His clothes were of dark blue, with brass buttons, and in the lapel of the coat was a smaller button of copper. In his right hand he carried a cane — just a plain stick, on which were fresh green spots where little twigs had been cut away; but he did not lean upon the stick, or use it as a cane, but held it rather as a man would hold a sword. He was very tall and straight, and there was a look of command in his eyes, which were still clear and sharp under his shaggy eyebrows; and that, with the long white hair and the snowy beard, trimmed to a point on the chin, made him a man that anyone would turn to look at.

The boy beside whom he had stopped rose quickly from the grass and looked up into his face, a little frightened; but his fear melted away at once, for the face lighted in a grave, sweet smile, and a deep voice said, "It is good to be gathering wild flowers on such a day."

"Yes, sir," said the boy; and at the sound of the voices other children joined them, so that in a few minutes all of them were gathered round the stranger, who had seated himself on a rock, with his back to a tree.

As the old man looked at them he smiled again and said, "Yes, there are few things better than gathering flowers on a day like this. I see that you have many beautiful ones. Do you know the names of them?"

They pulled their nosegays apart and showed him what they had — a few late violets, some little bell-like yellow lilies, wild geraniums, buttercups, and here and there a lady's-slipper.

"You have done well," said the old man, "but there is one flower that you have not found, and that flower is the loveliest and most wonderful in the whole world."

"What is it?" asked one of the little girls.

"It has many names, but I call it the Star in the Grass."

"We never heard of it," said the children. "Does it grow here?"

"It grows everywhere in this, our country, from the warm south to the far, cold north; but only in certain places, and to find it you must know those places."

"Are there any here?" asked one boy.

The old man shook his head. "Not in these woods, but very near. You have only to cross the road and you will come upon many, oh, so many, so many!" As he repeated the words, he looked away over the heads of the children, as if he did not see them.

"Let us go and find them!" cried one of the older boys; and some of the other children made as if to follow him.

But the old man raised his hand. "No," he said, "not yet. You would not know the flower if you saw it, nor where to look for it. I must tell you."

He stopped a moment, and the children waited. Then he went on, —

"I have told you that it is the loveliest and most wonderful flower in the world. There are many wonderful flowers. Some blossom only once in a lifetime, so that a man may live to be seventy years old and never see one of them in bloom. Others open only at certain hours of the day. One blossoms only in the night — you must go without your sleep to see it; and there are some that grow in wild and far-off places, but are so beautiful that men gladly risk their lives to get them.

"But the Star in the Grass is more wonderful and more beautiful even than they are, for, although it blossoms but once a year, it always blossoms on the same day of the year, so that those who know and do not forget can always be sure of finding it in bloom. North or south, east or west, wherever in this great country you may be on that day, there you will find the Star in the Grass, and always you will find it covered with blossoms.

"You will never know how much it cost to make that flower grow upon our soil, but it was far more than any other flower ever cost; for multitudes of men worked

more than four years for it, and spent hundreds of millions of dollars, and went cold, and were hungry and bore pain and suffered the loss of legs and arms to win it. And they did more, even, than that; for when they found that even then they could not win it without paying a still greater price, hundreds of thousands of them paid the price and gave up their lives.

"There are flowers in the world that have strange powers to take away the senses of men: to make them mad or drowsy, or to fill them with a desire to do evil; but the perfume of the Star in the Grass is not like that, although it is even more powerful. Those who breathe it are filled with courage and with love for their country, and their eyes are opened to the knowledge that to die for their country is the greatest glory that can come to anyone."

"But whose are those flowers now, that cost so much, and where do they grow? We have never seen them," said one of the children, as if he doubted the old man's words.

"They are yours and mine. They belong to every one of us who thinks enough of them to care for them; and they grow where those who paid so much for them have willed that they should grow. That is wherever a faithful soldier sleeps. They mark the resting-place of no coward, nor of anyone who did not give what he could."

The old man rose and looked smilingly down at the children. "I must go now," he said, "for this is the day when the Star in the Grass is heavy with its blossoms,

and I like to look upon them, and to breathe their fragrance. Would you care to come?"

The children gathered their bunches of wild flowers into their hands, and followed wonderingly and in silence. When they had come out of the little wood and had crossed the road, they passed, through high stone gates, into a great and beautiful garden, where a band was playing, and crowds of people were moving about, and there were other old men in blue clothes and brass buttons who hailed their guide as "Comrade." And by and by the band and the old men began to march; but every little while they stopped, and wherever they stopped the children saw a little flag, and there indeed, heaped all about it, were the blossoms of the Star in the Grass.

The Deer with a Red Tie

THE little girl had been sick, and the doctor said she must go away — to the woods or the sea — and stay a long time, perhaps a year. That is why her father and mother took her to live on a great farm a long way off.

It was after dark when they reached the farm, and Bessie lay asleep in her mother's arms, for she was very tired. All day they had ridden behind two horses, through thick woods that came right up to the sides of the wagon.

When the sun peeped in at the window the next morning, Bessie looked out on a new world. Instead of other houses near by, she saw only wide fields and high mountains, and all around the great green woods.

For many days she kept finding new things to enjoy. There were the four horses, Billy and Ben and Silas and old Jennie; and there were six cows, and one of them, Spot, had a beautiful little red calf. Then there was a small kitten, and a big yellow dog named Tige. Bessie learned to know them all, and to think of them as friends; but it was with the kitten and old Tige that she played most. She liked to put the kitten on the dog's back, and see him walk off, wagging his tail. It always made her laugh to see how funny Tige would look when the kitten would dig her claws into his back. He would

roll up his eyes and turn his head, as if he were saying, "Well, what are you sticking pins into me for?"

But after a time Bessie grew tired of those playmates, and began to wish that there was some other little girl that she could play with, or that she had some pet of her very own.

And then came the great fire. The air for days had been full of smoke, and all the woods looked blue, and the sun was a great golden-red ball. Men had come from other farms and places far away, with buckets and axes and blankets, to fight the fire. But all the time the smoke was getting thicker and more choky, and at night there were long, moving lines of red on the mountain, like companies of men marching with torches.

On the third day, after the men had gone to fight the fire, one of them came back with something on his shoulder. Bessie ran out to see what it was, and the man put into her arms a beautiful little spotted fawn. It cried like a lamb, for it had lost its mother, and was hungry.

As the man was going along a road through the woods, he had heard a little bleating at one side, and when he went to look, he had found the fawn lying under a bush. Its mother had been driven away by the fire, and in trying to follow her, the fawn had burned its feet so badly that it could go no farther, and had lain down to die. So the man put it on his shoulder and brought it to the house, and gave it to Bessie for her own.

The first thing was to teach it to drink milk. That

they did by rolling some linen rags into a little ball and dipping it into warm milk and then giving it to the fawn to suck. He learned quickly, and at the end of a week would lap the milk from a dish; and because it was Bessie who first fed him, he looked upon her as his mistress and best friend, and would follow her anywhere.

They named him Teddie. At first he used to sleep in the cow-shed; but as he grew bigger he wanted to be outdoors all the time, and so he was shut up no more, but wandered away in the woods whenever he pleased. But every morning, early, he came to the farmhouse door for the milk that he knew Bessie would get for him. If the door was shut and she did not hear him, he would bunt with his head until someone came; and one morning, when the door was open and his milk was warming in the oven, he walked right in without knocking, and went over to the stove and put his head in at the oven door and began to drink his milk.

Even old Tige became fond of Teddie, although he would chase other deer; and often you could see the fawn closely cropping the fresh grass, while old Tige sat watching him, as much as to say, "I'm here, and I will not let anyone hurt you."

By the time the cold weather came, Teddie had grown big and strong, and his feet were so well that he could walk as well as any other deer. And to Bessie the roses of her cheeks had come back, and she, too, was well and strong again, and was to go back to her old home. But the last thing she did before she went away was to tie

a red scarf firmly round Teddie's neck, so that no hunter could mistake him for a wild deer and shoot him. And some of the lumbermen who knew Bessie and her love for her pet placed sign-boards along the roads near the farm, on which they printed this: "Don't shoot the deer with a red necktie. He is tame, and his name is Teddie."

The Battle

IN its winding hollows among the hills of the back pasture the little pond stretches away, shady and inviting. It is not a deep pond — nowhere over a boy's head.

Such a pond is not to be found on every farm, and when Fred and his cousin Lewis came out of the woods path right at the edge of the water, of course they wanted to stop and play. They had been there many times before, and each of them had a raft which he had built, and on which he used to pole himself about among the islands. But this time they knew they ought not to stop, for Grandfather Dixon wanted them to come up to the back lot as soon as they had eaten their dinner, and bring the box of tools that stood on the end of the bench in the shop.

They had started early, and all the way had carried the box, which was heavy. Perhaps that is why they felt like stopping to rest a while when they reached the shore of the pond.

"Let's go out just a little way on the rafts," said Lewis. "We've got time enough."

"All right," said Fred, "but we must n't go far or stay long."

The boys put down the box of tools and started toward the two rafts. Just a little way from the shore

they came upon a peck measure, probably left there by one of the men when he carried salt to the sheep.

"Oh, look!" cried Fred, as he picked it up. "What a fine seat it will make!" And he carried it with him and placed it bottom-up on his raft.

The two boys took their long poles and pushed out. Lewis was a little ahead, and when he happened to look back and saw the peck measure on Fred's raft, he began to laugh. "It looks like the Monitor," he said.

Both boys had been reading about the wonderful battle between the Monitor and the Merrimac; and they remembered that at first someone had called the Monitor "a cheese-box on a raft," because the flat deck was so low, and there was hardly anything on it except the turret, which was like a large round iron box.

"I tell you what!" cried Fred. "Let's play battle! You be the Merrimac and I'll be the Monitor. I'll come out from behind the island, and you can meet me, and we will see which one can drive the other ashore."

Lewis agreed, and for a little while the boys chased each other's rafts up and down the little pond, and bunted them as hard as they could by setting their poles deep in the mud and pushing with all their strength. Then Lewis suddenly cried, "Let us make some oars! It's a great chance, while we have the tools here."

They went ashore and hunted about till they found some small boards. With a hatchet from the tool-box and their pocket-knives they soon made four small oars,

or paddles. By that time they had forgotten all about their errand. Lewis put the tool-box on his raft for a seat, and Fred had the peck measure, and they began to row about the pond. Fred thought he saw a chance to bunt the Merrimac in the side, and drive her ashore. So he bent over his oars and pulled as hard and fast as he could, without ever stopping to look over his shoulder.

All at once there was a dreadful thump — the two rafts had come together, bang! and before they knew what had happened, both boys had turned a somersault and rolled head over heels off the rafts into the water.

It was only up to their shoulders, and they waded through the mud to the shore.

Then they remembered their errand and how long they had stopped, and were frightened when they thought what their grandfather would say. Their clothes felt awfully cold and sticky before they got the heavy box up to the place where the men were working, and they felt so ashamed that they could not say anything when Grandfather Dixon asked them why they were so late. But he looked at them and their dripping clothes, and said, "Oh, I see! You have been hurrying all the way! You *must* have been. Why, you are fairly dripping with perspiration. Hurry home, now, just as fast as you can go, and tell your grandmother I think you must be sick, and I want her to put you to bed at once."

The Storehouse in the Wood

THE next time that Johnnie called on Uncle Zeb, after they had found the sassafras tree, he came upon the old man just as he was getting up from the breakfast-table. It was plain that a part of his meal had been bread and honey, for there was a little of the honeycomb still left on the plate. Uncle Zeb politely waved a hand toward the table and the honey, and said, "Help yourself."

"Do you like it?" he asked, as he watched the little boy eat.

"Yes," said Johnnie, "I like honey better than anything else in the world."

"Then perhaps you would like to help me get some."

"Where could we get it?" asked Johnnie. "I thought the grocer brought it."

"You can get it at the grocer's if you have money to pay for it; but we can get it without money, by knowing how, and working for it. Besides, it will be better honey; for what the grocer sells is tame honey, and what we shall get will be wild honey, with the taste of many flowers that do not grow in gardens."

With that, Uncle Zeb went to a closet and took out a little box, in which he put a piece of the honeycomb; and then they started.

Along the path round the foot of the mountain they

went, until they reached a little knoll that was bare of trees. There Uncle Zeb took out the little box and set it on a stump. Then he hunted round until he found two stones that were rather soft and crumbly. Over the cover of the box he rubbed the two stones together, until the rubbing made a white powder that fell on the box-cover. When there was a little heap of it, Uncle Zeb sent Johnnie to the brook to fill his drinking-cup with water; and while he was gone the old man chewed a little twig of birch until it was flattened out like a small paint-brush.

"Now," he said, "I think we are all ready."

Opening the little box, he laid a piece of the honey-comb on the stump, and held a lighted match to it until the comb began to smoke and scorch. Then he and Johnnie lay down in the edge of the woods a little way from the stump — to watch, as Uncle Zeb said. Johnnie did not know what they were watching for; but, while he was wondering, the old man touched his arm, and said, "Look!" And Johnnie saw that a bee had lighted on the comb and was helping herself to the honey.

Uncle Zeb rose quickly, and going quietly over to the stump, took the little wooden brush he had made, wet it in his mouth, dipped it into the white powder from the two stones, and painted the body of the bee, who was so eager to get the honey that she made no attempt to fly away. Then, beckoning Johnnie to him, the old man said, —

"In a minute or two now she will start for home. You must watch sharp to see which way she goes."

Johnnie kept his eyes fixed on the bee. Sure enough, in a little while she rose, circled round and round in the air, as if to take note of everything about the place, in order to be sure of finding the way back; then she struck out straight for the big woods on the other side of Thompson's Hollow.

Johnnie thought that they were to follow at once, but the old man said that they must wait until the bee came back; and he took out his big silver watch and began to count the minutes, — one, two, three, five, eight, ten, twelve, — and there was the bee back again — the same one, they were sure, for they could plainly see the white belt that Uncle Zeb had painted on her back.

"Her store of honey is about a mile away," said the old man. "A bee takes about five minutes to fly a mile, and she stays about two minutes in the hive. See the big hemlock on the other side of the hollow? Keep it in your eye. And now we will try again."

This time he took the box and the bit of honeycomb and went farther along toward the big hemlock. There he put the comb on a rock, and scorched it as before, and waited. When a bee lighted on it, he painted her as he had the first one, and then very carefully both he and Johnnie watched to see where she would go.

When she rose, she started in the same direction that the first one had taken.

"We know the road now," said the old man. "Let us go ahead."

Four times they set out the little bait of honeycomb, and every time the bees came back quicker from unloading their find of honey, until at last Uncle Zeb said, —

"We are getting very near. Look at all the big trees, to see if you can find a little hole with bees going in or coming out. Perhaps the under-side of the hole will show a little yellow stain, where some of the honey has rubbed off and run down."

And so they looked, until their necks ached, and Johnnie began to think there were no bees anywhere in the woods; but just then he heard Uncle Zeb call, and running to the spot where he stood, he saw him pointing to what looked like a little black knothole high up on an old sugar maple, out of which a bee crawled every few seconds.

"We have found it," said the old man. "From the looks, I think there is plenty of honey — perhaps two or three pailfuls, maybe a tubful. But we can get it best at night. To-morrow, then, at sunset, you will come to my house with a pair of overalls tied tight round your ankles, and a pair of old loose gloves on your hands, and a broad-brimmed hat on your head. Then we shall see what the wild bees have gathered for us."

Gathering the Treasure

UNCLE ZEB had told Johnnie to come about sunset, but he was ready half an hour before that time. He had done as the old man had told him. Over his short trousers he had put a pair of overalls which came clear to the ground, and which he had to turn up at the bottom to keep them from dragging. On his head was a broad-brimmed straw hat with a high crown, and in one of his pockets he had a pair of thick gloves.

But the sun had not yet touched the top of Little Whiteface, although it was near it, and so Johnnie sat down to wait and watch. Lower and lower the golden disk sank, until it touched the line of trees, and the hungry mountain nibbled a little piece out of the lower edge, just as Johnnie had often nibbled the edge of a cooky; and even as he watched, the bite grew bigger and the cooky smaller, until at last it was all bite, and there was no cooky left, as usually happens when bites and cookies come together. The sun had set, and it was time to go.

Johnnie found the old man sitting on his doorstep. Leaning against the side of the house was a sharp axe, and near by stood two shiny milk-pails and an old coffee-pot that had a round hole in the cover about as large as Johnnie's little finger. In the hole was a wooden

tube, like a pea-shooter, made from a joint of elderberry from which Uncle Zeb had punched the pith.

"Well," said the old man, with a smile, "our army seems to be ready. Let us go forward to the battle."

He gave Johnnie one of the milk-pails and the coffee-pot to carry, and took the axe and the other milk-pail himself; and then, in single file, they started for the bee tree — the big sugar maple that they had found the day before in the edge of the thick woods on the other side of Thompson's Hollow.

The old man led, although Johnnie felt sure that he could have found the way alone; but since the twilight had begun, and the woods were filling with strange shadows, he was glad, on the whole, that there was some one with him.

Straight to the old tree they went. Uncle Zeb leaned his axe against the trunk, and set his milk-pail down a little way off. From one of his big pockets he took a large piece of mosquito netting, which he threw over Johnnie's head, hat and all, and which he tucked carefully into his jacket. After that he tied Johnnie's overalls down over the tops of his boots, and told him to put on the gloves. Then, taking off his coat, he began to chop.

The notch in the tree grew deeper and deeper. When it was a little more than halfway through, Uncle Zeb stopped, and began on the other side, where he soon had another notch that by and by would meet the first one.

"There!" he said, as he laid the axe aside. "Now we are almost ready for your part of the work."

"What am I to do?" asked Johnnie.

"You are going to put the bees to sleep, and keep them asleep while I take out the honey. But first get me some dry sticks for a fire."

In a few minutes Johnnie had an armful of sticks piled neatly together. The old man touched a match to it, and it burst into cheerful flame. When it was burning well, he took from his pocket a lump of something yellow, nearly as large as his fist, and after raking some of the blazing coals from the fire into the old coffee-pot, he dropped the yellow lump in on top of them and quickly shut the lid.

"Now," he said to Johnnie, "stand back on this side, for the tree is coming down; and when it falls, take the coffee-pot and put the spout into the hole where we saw the bees go in yesterday, and blow through the wooden tube in the cover. That will drive the smoke into the tree and put the bees to sleep. But you must be careful only to blow through the tube, and not to breathe in through it; for the yellow stuff that I put on the coals is sulphur, and if you breathe it, it will make you cough."

Again came the sharp strokes of the axe, and then a warning crack that made Uncle Zeb jump away. Against the sky the top of the old tree quivered a moment, and then, slowly at first, but rushing ever faster, it crashed to earth with a great crackling of limbs and a roar that shook the ground and filled the woods with the cries of startled birds.

No sooner had it come to rest than Johnnie had the

They were going to put the bees asleep and keep them asleep until they had taken out the honey.

spout of the coffee-pot at the bee-hole, and was blowing through the elder tube in quick, short puffs that shot the sulphur smoke far into the tree. The few bees that got out buzzed angrily round. Some of them settled on Johnnie's hands and head, and indeed all over his body; but they could not sting through his clothing or get through the veil of mosquito netting, and so he kept on blowing, unharmed.

Uncle Zeb now came forward with the axe, and with a few sharp strokes split out a long slab from the side of the tree which laid bare the home of the bees, and all the wealth that it held — comb after comb of honey, not snowy white, like that from the stores, but some of it dark, and some golden yellow, and all of it, as the old man had said, rich with the taste of flowers that do not grow in gardens.

While Johnnie held a blazing brand to serve as a torch, the old man carefully cut out the combs and put them into the pails. There was almost enough to fill both of them, and Johnnie's share was all he could carry.

"What will the bees do, now that we have robbed them?" he asked, on the way home. "Will they starve?"

"Oh, no. It is still early in the summer, and they have plenty of time to make another nest and fill it before cold weather comes."

"Still, it seems kind of mean to take it all, does n't it?"

"Well, maybe so," answered the old man, "but when folks tell everyone else where they keep their riches, they must expect to be robbed."

The Game of "T.G.B.B."

GRANDFATHER and Aunt Mary and Cousin Sarah and the two small boys, Lewis and John, were sitting on the piazza. Grandfather had a golf-stick in his hand, Lewis had some tennis-balls, and John had a racket. On the piazza floor was a basket-ball, which Aunt Mary and Cousin Sarah were idly pushing back and forth with quick little shoves of their toes.

They had all been talking about what they should do that afternoon. Grandfather wanted a game of golf, but there was no one to play with him. Aunt Mary and Cousin Sarah would have enjoyed the lively sport of basket-ball, but the friends who had played with them at other times had driven to town this afternoon. The boys wanted a game of tennis, but although there were plenty of tennis-balls, there was only one racket. There did not seem to be anything they could all do together. But down on the lawn, under a large tree, stood an empty peach-basket.

When grandfather saw it, he got up, put his golf-stick in the corner of the hall, and said, "We will make a new game, one that all of us can play. We shall make our own rules to suit ourselves, so that the game will be our very own."

That is how the game of "T.G.B.B." came to be played. Those who know it enjoy it as much as golf, tennis, or basket-ball, and play it as often.

Grandfather first sent Lewis and Johnnie to the shed to get some more empty peach-baskets. They came back with five. One they were told to place away down by the gate, on the right-hand side of the walk. The second they put at the back side of the house, where no one could see it from the piazza. A third was set at the corner of the wood-shed, another in the field behind the barn, and the last one on the piazza itself.

"There," said grandfather, "now we have our course laid out. The game is to start here, and by batting a tennis-ball with the racket, see how few strokes it will take to put the ball in all the baskets, one after the other, ending with this one here on the piazza."

Everybody saw at once what the game was to be, and they laughed to think how easy it was.

"But what are the rules?" asked Lewis.

"Well," said grandfather, "at first we will have as few and as simple rules as we can.

"Each player will have his own tennis-ball, with some mark on it, so that he can tell it at once; but all of us can use the same racket. We will all start from the same place, at the same time, and go over the course together. Each shall have but one stroke, and then shall pass the racket to the next player.

"When all have played one stroke, we will march forward to the balls, and the first player shall make his second stroke, standing on the spot where his ball lies. Then the others shall play in turn, in the same way, each standing just exactly where his ball lies.

"A ball, to count as pocketed, must stay in the basket, and not bound out. The one who puts his ball in the last basket with the smallest number of strokes shall be counted the winner."

Those are the rules as grandfather made them up that first day. They have never been changed, except that when there are tennis-rackets enough to go round, each player has one.

The name, "T.G.B.B.," is made up of the first letters of tennis, golf, and basket-ball, because the game has in it a little of each.

The family had much fun playing it that summer and fall, and have enjoyed it in other years since. Nobody is too old to play it, and nobody too young, and any number can take part by changing the number of peach-baskets, and putting them in different places.

Why the Squirrels Moved

OLD MR. SQUIRREL and his family had lived many years at The Oaks. He had gone there when he was young, because there were so many good things to eat, and he had never been far away from it since then. Four children still lived with their father and mother — Hazel and her three brothers, Bob, Rags, and Skinny.

Happy were the hours they spent together, chasing one another up and down the trunks of the great trees. There were such good things to eat! And the only hard work they had to do was to gather and store away the shagbarks for the winter, and to collect feathers and soft grasses and tough leaves to line the house where they spent their winters, in the hollow heart of the great tree that they had heard people speak of as the "Grandfather Oak." Those things meant going back and forth many times when they wished to play; but old Mr. Squirrel and his wife would not let them be idle, for they were wise, and knew that a time would come when they would need the warm grasses and feathers, and the nuts and acorns.

The family had already put away a part of its winter stores, when one day Rags came home to tell of a discovery he had made. In one of the attic windows of the great house he had found a hole, and by going through

it he had come upon wonderful things. Hanging overhead was a great store of corn, and on the floor were baskets and bags of nuts — so many that the whole family could live on them for years, and not have to work at all.

More wonderful still, there was in the attic the finest straw house that anyone had ever seen — big enough for the whole family; and near by it he saw things much better for beds than leaves and feathers could ever be.

Rags said so much about his discovery that they all ran after him, to see. It was just as he had said, and the younger members of the family were for moving in at once; but Mr. Squirrel shook his head.

"The people might come back, and then we should be put out," he said.

But all the others talked so fast, and the children teased so hard, that at last he decided to move in.

"We shall have a real bungalow," said Hazel.

In the little straw house Rags and his brothers cut two doors, one in the centre and the other at the end, and then they began to move the bedding in. Hazel chose a blue bed with yellow stripes, and Skinny a purple one with white dots, and Mr. and Mrs. Squirrel a large soft red one.

Then began a delightful time. No more need of carrying acorns or nuts, for here, close at hand, were all they could eat, just for the taking. On pleasant days they could go out through the hole in the attic window and play in the sun; and on stormy days they could stay

in and chase one another, round the chimney and down the long floor and back; and at night no cold winds reached them in their snug house and warm beds.

Is it any wonder that the whole family grew proud, and were no longer willing to do any work?

But one sad day a terrible thing happened. The family had gone to bed. They were awakened by a great noise, a sound of heavy feet stamping up the stairs, and loud voices.

"Quick! Quick!" cried Mr. Squirrel.

And they had just time to dash out through the hole in the attic window and perch, trembling, on the edge of the roof, in the winter cold, when the door burst open and a giant strode across the room with a great light in his hand. He picked up their bungalow as easily as if it had been a hand-bag; and then they heard him call out, —

"Here, come and see what those rascally squirrels have done! They have gnawed holes in my straw suitcase, and dragged three or four of my neckties into it, for a nest, and have been living here like kings!"

And then they heard a great pounding, so near that they all scurried away to the ridgepole; and when it had stopped, and the light had gone away, and all was still again, they crept back, and found that the hole in the window had been closed with a heavy board, and that there was no way to get back to their warm beds and the corn and nuts.

That was a long, hard winter for the Squirrel family.

There was no way to get back to their warm beds and the corn and nuts.

They had to go back to their old home in the Grandfather Oak and dig the snow and wet leaves out of the nest. Then they had to line it again, and all winter they had to paw under the grass and leaves and snow in the woods, and gnaw frozen apples in the orchard, to get enough to eat. They were ashamed to ask their cousins, the Rufus Squirrels, for even a single acorn, and were glad enough when spring came again.

The next year they began early, and put the old nest in order, and laid in a great store of good things, so that no one could turn them out of doors again

Grandfather's Dan

IN the parlor of the little house which cuddled close under a hill by the seashore there hung a picture that Johnnie liked to look at.

It was the picture of an old white-haired man, sitting on a bench by an open door. In his lap he held a long gun, and between his knees nestled a large and very handsome Newfoundland dog, with long curly black hair; but on the face and chest and about the fore paws and the tip of his tail, there were patches of pure white.

The man was Johnnie's grandfather, who had lived all his life in this little house by the sea, and the dog was old Dan. Grandfather had raised him from a puppy, and had kept and loved him until old age came and called him away to the place where good dogs go.

During all his long life Dan had been a real help to his master, and Johnnie was fond of hearing his grandmother tell of the way the dog had paid his board; but best of all, he liked the story of the time when his grandfather had to help Dan. This is the story he had heard so often.

The coast on which the little house stands is very cold in winter. The ice forms thick in all the little coves, and sometimes it freezes hard way out into the bay. Food is not easy to get, and sometimes the family would have to go hungry if it were not for the ducks.

All along the shore, and especially in the little coves, there are great flocks of wild ducks that come down from the far north in order to find open water and something to eat. Whenever grandfather's family had need of meat, grandfather would take down his long gun, and going down to the shore, would build a little fort of cakes of ice and snow, and by hiding in that, he would by and by get a shot at some ducks. Then it was that Dan earned his board. As soon as he saw a duck fall, away he would go, over the icy shore and into the water. He would swim out to the duck, take it carefully in his mouth, and swim back and lay it at his master's feet.

This went on for many years. No swim seemed too long and no water too cold for the dog; and by his work and grandfather's gun there was usually good meat in the little house.

But of course Dan was growing older all the time, and a dog gets to be old before a boy gets to be a young man.

One day, when a northeast storm had driven great flocks of ducks into the cove, and piled the cakes of ice thick along the shore, grandfather took old Dan with him and went out.

It was still snowing a little, and a strong wind blew, and because of that it was a good time to get ducks enough to last the family half the winter. The snow made it easier to keep hidden, and the wind made it harder for the ducks to hear the noise of the gun.

Time after time, as old Dan saw a bird come down,

he plunged into the icy water, swam away into the mist of the snowstorm, and in a little while would come paddling back to the big ice-cake where grandfather lay, and drop his prize at the old man's feet. He did that until thirty ducks were piled on the ice. And then he started out once more. Grandfather remembered afterward that, before Dan let himself down into the water this time, he looked up into his face and paused a moment and gave a whine; but he did not think much about it then.

The duck for which Dan had started lay a long way off, so that the dog had to swim farther than usual; but he kept steadily on, pounding his way through the waves, until he reached the bird. Grandfather saw him take it in his mouth and start back. But the dog seemed to swim very slowly, and to make no headway against the waves. Then, suddenly, he dropped the bird and gave a long, whimpering cry. He was old. The chill of the waters had struck to his heart. His strength was gone and he could do no more. The cry was a call for help, to the friend he had known longest and best.

The moment that grandfather heard the call he stood up and looked. He saw the old dog battling for his life, his head barely above water, his big, kind eyes turned toward the shore. Grandfather dropped his gun and tore off his heavy coat. "Hold on, Danny, old boy! I'm coming!" he called. Then he pulled off his boots and plunged into the water.

The cold cut through him like a knife and stiffened his

arms and legs, for he, too, was beginning to be old. But the thought of his faithful friend made him forget everything else, and after what seemed a long time he was able to reach out one hand and grasp Dan's collar.

It was a hard swim back to the ice-cake, but the dog helped himself all he could, and the hand on his collar kept his head above water. When they reached the ice, the man pushed the dog up first, and then the dog turned round, and fixing his teeth in the man's shirt, helped him out.

They left the ducks and the gun on the shore, and together crawled slowly up to the house, where grandmother soon had them wrapped in hot blankets before a blazing open fire.

After that day Dan would never let grandfather out of his sight, nor would he follow any other member of the family.

His Task

"FATHER," said Tommy Harris, one day in June, "if I earn some money this summer, may I have it for myself, to do what I want to with?"

"Why, yes, I think so," said his father. "But what are you going to do? How are you going to earn any money?"

"I'm going to mow Mr. Webster's lawn. I heard him say he wished he knew of some boy he could trust to keep the lawn mowed all summer. I'm going to ask him to let me do it. May I have the use of your lawn-mower if he gives me the work?"

"Yes, if you will take good care of it and put it back where it belongs when you are done."

Tom promised, and the next day, when Mr. Webster came home from the city, he went over and asked him.

The lawn was a large one, and there were some trees and shrubs on it. Mr. Webster got up from his piazza chair and took Tom down on the lawn. He showed him how he wanted it cut, and told him that the boy who got the job must be careful not to break the shrubs, and must not knock the bark off any of the young trees, and must trim the borders with the grass-shears and rake up and carry away the grass.

"Do you think you can do that, and do it right, all summer?" Mr. Webster asked.

Tom thought he could.

"Well," said Mr. Webster, "I want it cut once every week. I don't care what day you cut it, because some weeks, when it rains a good deal, it grows faster than others; but I want it always to look neat on Sundays. You must watch it and cut it whenever it needs it. I will give you fifty cents each time."

Tom went home well pleased. He watched the lawn, and the next Wednesday he cut it very nicely, taking care to trim the edges and to carry away the grass, and not to break any of the shrubbery.

The next week on Wednesday he was going to mow the lawn again, but there was a ball game that afternoon, and the boys wanted him to play first base. The grass did not look so very long, anyway, so he played ball, and was going to cut the lawn on Thursday.

But Thursday it rained hard, and he could not work outdoors, so he had to wait till Friday. He cut the grass then, but it was much longer than it had been the week before, and so it did not cut so smooth. When he had finished it, there were some rough places where the tall grass had been pressed down by the lawn-mower, but had not been cut off. Still, he thought it would not be noticed.

The next time the grass needed cutting, Tom went at it bright and early in the morning. He had got about a quarter of it done when Eddie Ives came along with a bat over his shoulder and a catcher's mitt on one hand. He stopped at the fence, and called, "Come on, Tom! We're going to play the White Stars."

"I can't," said Tom. "I must work."

"Oh, you can do that in half an hour. Let it go till afternoon. We want you in the game."

Tom left the lawn-mower just where it stood, and went off with his friend Eddie. The boys all said they were glad he was there, too, because in the second inning he caught a high fly that put out the third runner of the Stars.

But just before the end of the game, in trying to stop a hot grounder, he hurt his hand so badly that he had to go home and have it bandaged. It made him forget about Mr. Webster's lawn and where he had left the lawn-mower.

He thought of it the next morning, and tried to finish the work; but the mower, being out in the dew all night, had rusted, so that it ran hard — and he could not find the oil-can. Besides, his hand hurt him. After a while he called in Jimmy Russell, who was passing, and got him to help. But Jimmy was small, and could not handle the mower very well. In going round one of the shrubs, he broke off a big branch; and he also knocked a piece of bark from the trunk of a small white birch tree, and the dark scar showed very plainly.

By the time they had finished, it was too late to rake up the grass and carry it off. Tom kicked it round a little, where it was thickest, so that it would not look quite so bad. He said to himself that next time he would begin early and stick to it and do better. His hand would be well by that time.

But the next time never came. When the grass was long enough to mow again, and Tom went over to Mr. Webster's place, pushing the lawn-mower ahead of him, he found the grass all nicely cut, and a short, red-headed boy raking it up.

"Here, Sam Casey!" cried Tom. "What are you doing on my lawn?"

"It is n't your lawn any more. It's my lawn."

"What do you mean?" asked Tom.

"I mean that I'm going to cut it once a week all summer, for fifty cents a time."

"Who told you so?"

"Mr. Webster did — the man who lives here. He said he was tired of having it half-done or not done at all, and so I'm going to do it."

There was nothing more to be said. Tom went slowly home and put away his lawn-mower. The chance to earn some money during the summer was gone; but he had learned a lesson that in the end was worth a good deal more money; and the next summer, when he got other lawns to mow, he did his work well and faithfully.

Roy's Bear-Hunt

THE moment that Roy stepped out on the back piazza he knew that it was just the morning for a bear-hunt. The air was clear and cool, with just a little bit of breeze blowing; not enough to make so much noise in the woods that you could not hear a bear coming, but just enough so that the bear could not smell you if you were careful to notice which way the wind was blowing. Then, besides, the grass was wet a little, so that the dead leaves did not rustle when you walked through them.

Roy had his new bow-gun, that Henry, the hired man, had made for him. It was a gun that would shoot very far and very hard indeed. Henry had tried it by shooting at a tomato-can which he had set up on top of a fence-post, and the arrow had knocked the can way off and made a big dent in it. The clump of trees and bushes at the back end of the orchard, near the spring-house, was the best place to hunt. Bears had often been seen all about there; and it was a fine place to look for them, because there were plenty of bushes where you could hide, and an old stone wall behind which you could creep up close.

Roy loaded his bow-gun very carefully, putting in his best arrow. He had just started to steal along slowly, looking closely at the ground to see if he could find

any tracks, when there was a sharp bark at his heels, and Ginger, his fox-terrier, came rushing up, wagging his stump of a tail.

"Here, Ginger! You go back! You can't come," whispered Roy. "This is a bear-hunt. Go home now!"

Ginger just wagged his tail harder, as much as to say, "Yes, sir. Certainly, sir," and kept right on. And Roy had to let him go, because it would not do to make any loud talk or other noise that might frighten the bear.

It took a long time to reach the hunting-grounds, walking very slowly and stooping a good deal, as you have to do when you are after bears. But by and by the edges of the bushes were reached, and Roy began to look even more carefully for tracks. He did not find any at first, although he looked under the syringa bush and all about the damp ground near the clump of raspberries; and bears are very fond of raspberries.

But now he was approaching the currant bushes. Ah! There it was! A track! There were two tracks, as plain as could be! And looking ahead a little way, Roy saw the bear himself — a big brown fellow, standing up straight on his hind legs under a currant bush, his little black eyes twinkling and watching out sharp.

Now was the time to be very careful, because when bears stand up that way, it means that they are on the lookout for danger.

The first thing was to find out which way the wind was. Of course, Roy could have looked back at the

weather-vane on the barn if he had wanted to; but that would not have been the right way. So he wet his forefinger and held it up in the air, as Henry had taught him to do. And by seeing which side of the finger got cold first, he could tell that the wind was blowing from the east. That was bad, because it was right toward the bear, which would be sure to smell him.

The only thing to do was to work off to the right, get over the wall, and creep back to the left on the other side. If he could get as far as the crab-apple tree, he would be all right.

Slowly he crawled from bush to bush, sometimes on his hands and knees, sometimes on his stomach, till he reached the wall. He climbed over without making a bit of noise, and began to creep toward the crab-apple tree. When, at last, he reached it, and stood up, very softly, very still, there was the bear within ten feet of him, standing, just as he had seen him first, under the currant bush. He had not seen Roy at all, or smelled him, or moved a single muscle.

Pushing the gun carefully over the wall, Roy took steady aim. Crash! went the bow, and plunk! went the bear. He was hit square in the middle, and rolled over and over, and finally lay still on his back, with all four of his bare feet up in the air.

With a shout, Roy started to climb the wall; but before he could get over, Ginger had rushed ahead and grabbed the bear, and was shaking him so that the fur was all coming off.

He tied a long string to one of the bear's hind legs, and with the gun over one shoulder and the string over the other, he started to drag the bear to the house.

As soon as Roy could get the bear away from Ginger, he tied a long string to one of his hind legs, and with the gun over one shoulder and the string over the other, started to drag the bear up to the house. But just as he reached the stable, his sister Ethel came running out.

"Here, what are you doing with my Teddy bear?" she cried. "You stop dragging him that way! You 're wearing him all out!"

Roy stopped and untied the string. "Huh," he said, "this is a bear that I just shot down in the garden! But you may have him!"

Out of the Big Marsh

ONE warm afternoon in August, Johnnie was sitting in Uncle Zeb's shop, watching the old man as he put a new seat in a chair.

"I guess I shall have to go out to the big marsh to-morrow," said Uncle Zeb.

"What do you have to go there for?" asked Johnnie.

"To get some more rushes. I've got only enough left to finish this job, and August is the best time to cut them."

"What are rushes, Uncle Zeb?"

"Why, these things"; and the old man held up the coarse cord that he had been weaving back and forth across the frame of the chair.

Johnnie saw then that it was not a string, as he had thought, but the long, dry, ribbon-like leaves of a plant, twisted tightly together; and Uncle Zeb told him how rushes grow, and that in August, for hundreds of years, people have gathered them to make seats for chairs.

"May I go with you?" asked Johnnie, after a while.

"Do you think your legs are long enough?"

"Why, is it very far?"

"Not very far from here to there, but pretty far up and down. The mud is deep. Do you think you could stand it to sink in up to your knees, and feel the cold, black mud oozing up between your toes?"

Johnnie thought he could.

"All right, then," said Uncle Zeb. "You be here at nine o'clock to-morrow morning. Perhaps you can help me some; and anyway, it's more fun when there are two."

So just as the clock struck nine the next morning, Johnnie turned in at the old man's gate. Uncle Zeb was ready. He gave Johnnie a pair of funny little thin boards to carry — boards about a foot wide and two feet long, with holes in them in which were straps like skate-straps. In his own hand he carried a sharp sickle.

It took them nearly an hour to reach the marsh, for the old man wore long, heavy rubber boots, and walked slowly.

The marsh was beautiful, Johnnie thought; for as far as he could see on every side the soft green of the rushes stretched away like a great field of grain, bending and bowing to the morning breeze. But it was wet, as the old man had told him it would be.

He was about to take off his shoes and stockings when Uncle Zeb said, "Do you think it is too warm for snowshoes?"

"Snowshoes?" asked Johnnie, wondering what the old man meant.

Uncle Zeb laughed. "Well, then, let 's call them mud-shoes."

And with that he picked up the two little boards that Johnnie had been carrying, and showed him how to strap them on his feet. When they were once in place,

Both Johnnie and Uncle Zeb worked hard until nearly noon, cutting the rushes and tying them into bundles.

Johnnie found that he could walk even on the softest places without sinking in. It made him feel almost as free as a bird.

Both Johnnie and Uncle Zeb worked hard till nearly noon, cutting the rushes and tying them into bundles, which they carried to the dry bank by the side of the marsh.

Just as Johnnie started out with the last bunch, Uncle Zeb stooped and began to pull up some rushes by the roots. To Johnnie they looked exactly like those that they had been cutting, but Uncle Zeb showed him that they were different. The roots were almost as large as a man's finger, and full of twists and turns, as if they had started to grow in one way, and then had changed their mind. Johnnie thought they looked wiggly, like big fuzzy worms, for between the joints at the top of the roots were rows of little hairs that made him think of caterpillars.

"We may as well have some sweets, to pay us for our work," said the old man, as he put the roots in his pocket.

As soon as they got back to the house Uncle Zeb took the roots from his pocket and washed them under the pump. When they were clean he cut them into little squares, which were white at first, but which in a little while began to take on the color of violets.

Into a small tin dish he put some sugar, and over it poured hot water until the sugar melted. When it had boiled a few minutes, and become a thick syrup, he put

the little squares into it and stirred them round until they were all covered with the melted sugar. Then, with a skimmer, he took them out and spread them on a clean sheet of paper, where the wind would strike them, but not the sun.

In a little while they were dry, and Johnnie noticed that each square sparkled like the head of a frost-covered nail.

"Taste them," said the old man.

Johnnie put one into his mouth. It was different from anything he had ever tasted before, but good; a little "bitey" when he chewed it, but sweet and full of flavor as long as he only sucked it.

"What is it?" he asked.

"Sweet flag-root," said the old man. "When I was a boy, people used to take it to church with them, to keep them awake through the long sermons; and even now doctors sometimes use it in medicine. So you see that the big marsh is really a furniture store, a candy shop, and a drug store, all in one, and you can pay in work for everything that you get there."

Grandmother's Panther

ONE winter a good many years ago, when Grandmother Fossett was a small girl, it began to be told from house to house in the little village where she lived that some fierce wild animal was prowling about.

No one had seen it, and no one knew what it was. The first news came from David Rollins, who had been roused from a sound sleep one dark night by a great bellowing and stamping among the cattle in his barn and a loud squealing among the pigs. He slipped into his clothes as soon as he could, and hurried out. He found all the animals very much excited and frightened, and one pig, in the pen under the barn, was badly cut or scratched about the head. There was nothing else to be seen, and as the ground was bare and frozen hard, no tracks could be found.

In a week another neighbor, Mr. Peleg Gibson, came home from his wood-lot one evening much excited and very pale. He had been cutting cord-wood all day, and had not started for home till nearly dark. A part of the way led through a swamp where there was a thick growth of cedar, so that he could see only a little way on either side. While he was going through the swamp, Mr. Gibson heard a stick snap, and by and by another; then he heard soft foot-falls, and became sure that something

was following him. He did not dare run, but walked as fast as he could; and whatever it was that was following him kept up the chase until he came out into the open orchard just back of the house.

By that time the little settlement began to be much disturbed, and everybody talked of the strange animal. Some thought it was a wolf; others said it was probably a bear; still others believed it was only a big wildcat or lynx. But some felt sure that it was a panther.

Then came the first big snow, which settled down to make good sleighing. The roads were rough and poor, and every winter, as soon as it got cold enough to make good thick ice, the people began to use the Kennebec River to travel on, because a sleigh would run better on the smooth, level ice than on the "bumpity" roads.

One evening, a few days after the big snow, the whole village was stirred by the attempt of some animal to attack Gideon Lang's colt right in the barn-yard. The men were milking when they heard the colt scream. They rushed out just in time to see a big, shadowy thing leap over the bars at one jump and disappear in the darkness. They got lanterns and returned, and soon found the tracks in the snow — great tracks twelve or fifteen feet apart. There was no longer any doubt that the beast was a panther, and a big one, too.

The next day it was decided to have a grand hunt. All the men in the settlement, and all the dogs, were to gather at noon and chase the panther until it should be caught. There was great excitement among the chil-

dren, and Grandmother Fossett, who was then nine years old, helped to put up a luncheon for her father and brothers, because they thought they might have to be away all night. And she was out with the others at noon to see the hunters start.

But that very afternoon word came up-river that grandmother's married sister, who lived twelve miles below, was sick, and wanted Polly — that was grandmother — to come at once. She had sent Nathan, her husband, to bring Polly in the sleigh.

It was nearly dusk before they could make the start; but at last old Canada, the faithful little black mare, picked her way carefully down the steep, icy hill, and came out on the smooth, broad surface of the frozen river, with Polly snugly wrapped in a red shawl and warm buffalo-robe.

Her first thought when she found she was to go had been of the panther. What if it should get away from the men and the dogs, and follow her!

Out on the river it seemed very still and scary. Once she heard dogs barking away off somewhere down-river, and that made her think still more of the panther. The moon was small and gave only a little light, and the road, which followed close to the high bank, lay almost wholly in shadow.

Every time a tree or a limb cracked in the frost Polly's heart beat so hard she could hardly swallow, and in every black stump she thought she could see a great crouching beast ready to spring upon her.

When she told Nathan how scared she was, he only laughed and said he "guessed there was n't much danger." If he had only said there was n't *any* danger, and said it as if he knew! But he did not. He just said "*much* danger."

The journey was nearly half-over when the sleigh reached a dark wooded point that ran out into the river. Just as they turned the point Polly chanced to look back along the way they had come. There was only a moment before the point shut off the view, but in that moment Polly suddenly saw a great black shape appear from a dark shadow, flash across a patch of moonlight, and come tearing along the road in great leaps.

With one wild scream Polly cried, "He's coming! He's coming! The panther is coming! He is right here behind us! Oh, quick, quick!" and grabbed Nathan's arm.

Nathan turned his head, and almost without knowing it, hit old Canada a sharp crack with the whip; and as he looked back, the black shape came round the sleigh.

Polly was now so frightened that she could not even scream; but just as she thought she could almost feel the panther's awful teeth, the black shape came up even with old Canada's head, and leaping sidewise, let out a loud bark — a joyous "Wow! wow! wow!" of friendliness and welcome.

It was old Prince, the family dog. He had got out

of the shed and followed the sleigh, and he was the panther.

Grandmother always said that the rest of that journey was the happiest sleigh-ride she ever had. And she was happier still when she got home, a week later, and saw the skin of the real panther nailed on the door of the corn-barn, drying in the sun. She used to like to tell the story to her grandchildren, and I have told it to you just as she told it to us.

Three Orphans

THE Bradfords had been settled in their summer home nearly a week when Louis, looking up from his book one afternoon a little before sunset, saw a small brown head pop out from under the corner of the carriage-house.

At first the only thing that he could think of was a rat, for he had heard his father say at breakfast that rats had been getting into the grain. But he kept very still, and in a little while the head poked out farther, and then the whole body followed, and he saw that the animal was much larger than a rat. In fact, it was as large as a full-grown cat or a small dog. It had a round, fat body covered with grayish-brown hair, and a broad head with small ears that hardly showed at all.

With little runs of a foot or two at a time, the creature ventured farther and farther away from the corner of the carriage-house; and then, to Louis's astonishment, it stood up on its hind quarters, with its fore-paws hanging down in front, and looked all about, to see whether it was safe to go any farther. But just then Louis leaned too far forward in his eagerness to see, and his book slipped to the floor of the piazza with a loud slam. At that, the strange animal flashed back out of sight into his hole so quickly that it looked like a mere brown streak.

When Louis told the gardener what he had seen, the old man laughed, and said he guessed it was only a woodchuck, and that they would see him again before long; but though Louis watched for several days, he saw nothing more of the brown head or the fat, round body.

But one morning he waked very early, and looking out of his window, saw the woodchuck feeding in plain sight on the grass-plot behind the house.

In the corner stood the little rifle that had come to Louis's older brother as a Christmas present, and on a shelf near by stood the box of cartridges. Louis had been allowed to use the rifle when he was with his brother, but had never tried it alone. Now, he thought, his chance had come.

Very quietly he slipped over to the corner, took down the box of cartridges, and slipped one of them into the rifle. Then, barefooted, he tiptoed downstairs, carefully slid the bolt of the back door, and stepped out. Stealing to the corner of the house, he looked round. Yes, the woodchuck was still there, and still feeding! It had not been alarmed.

Louis raised the little rifle slowly, rested the barrel against the corner of the house, took careful aim, and pulled the trigger. At the report he saw something flop, and ran to the edge of the grass-plot. There lay the woodchuck, still now, and looking up at Louis with glazing eyes, as if to say, "Why did you do it? Have I ever harmed you?" And then the eyes closed, and the woodchuck was dead.

Louis went back to the house; but instead of feeling proud of what he had done, he began to ask himself why he had done it, and he could not find any good answer.

To be sure, he had heard the gardener say that woodchucks destroy garden vegetables; but when he looked, after breakfast, he could find none that seemed to have been nibbled; and when he went to see what the little animal had been eating when he shot it, he found only a patch of clover.

"What about the young ones?" asked the gardener that noon.

"Young ones?" asked Louis. "What young ones?"

"Why, that old woodchuck had a family. There are three young ones in the hole under the carriage-house. I saw them all out together the other day," said the gardener.

"Will they starve to death?" asked Louis, much troubled.

"I'm afraid they will, unless somebody kills them — or feeds them."

Louis asked no more questions. That afternoon he went to work with a spade at the corner of the carriage-house. It took him until nearly night, but when he finished, he had three little balls of fur, with frightened black eyes that watched every move he made. The gardener found an old squirrel-cage in the loft, and into it they put the three orphans, with a big bunch of fresh clover; and in the morning the clover was gone.

That is the way Louis got his little family. Two or

three times a day he had to feed them, but he felt paid when he saw how quickly they began to lose their fear of him. In a week he could take them out of the cage and handle them as he could the kitten; and in two weeks they would run all round the yard, picking a dainty clover-leaf here and a little sorrel there, but always ready to come running when he whistled to them. It always made him laugh to see them sit up first, when he whistled, to see where he was before they started.

Never did any other family of orphan woodchucks fare so well! Besides the clover and the sorrel, there were tender leaves of lettuce, and the juicy pods of peas, and bits of carrot. All of the family grew round and fat, as their mother had been, and all of them followed Louis round; and whenever the cook would let them, they would crawl in behind the stove and cuddle together and sleep.

When September came, and it was time for Louis to go back to school, the three orphans, now big enough to take care of themselves, were taken to the pasture, and set down beside a beautiful hole in the ground. But since then, Louis has never taken a rifle in his hand without first stopping to ask himself what he was going to do, and why.

A Game Postponed

IN the shade of a big maple that grew by the side of the road sat a small boy with a very sour look on his face. In one hand he held a baseball. The other rested on a bat that lay by his side. In the field across the road a few boys of about his own age were playing; along the road were passing little groups of children with flowers in their hands.

A brass band had gone by a few minutes before, with a line of white-haired old men trailing after it; but even that had not driven the sour look from the face of the boy under the tree. The music was slow and queer, and the old men dragged along, some of them out of step, and all of them looking worn and tired, and very little like the men in uniform who usually march behind a band.

Everyone seemed to be going to the burying-ground that lay next to the ball-field. When most of the people had passed, an old man came along the road. He walked slowly and with a cane, and in one hand carried a large bunch of lilacs and lilies of the valley. Roddy Wilkinson, the boy under the tree, saw that the old man wore a broad-brimmed black hat like the other old men who had gone by, and had a little copper button in the lapel of his coat; but it did not interest him.

When the old man saw the big maple, he stopped, and

took off his hat and wiped his forehead, for the day was hot. Then he went over toward Roddy, climbed the little slope of the bank, and sat down.

At first he sat still, and said nothing; but in a little while, seeing the ball and the bat, he looked down at Roddy with a smile, and said, "Going to have a little game?"

"No, sir," Roddy answered. "I *was* going to, but my father told me I must n't — at any rate, till afternoon. I don't see what difference it makes — just because a lot of people want to take flowers to the graveyard. I did n't know any of those soldiers."

"No, of course not," said the old man, in a kindly way. "You did n't know them, and they did n't know you, but they thought about you a good deal."

"Who — me?" asked Roddy, with a puzzled look.

"Yes, about you and all the other boys who were to come after them. That's why they did what they did. They had to look a long way ahead, and think of others instead of themselves. If they had thought only of themselves, they would have stayed at home.

"Now there was Johnnie Cramer. He was only sixteen — a boy just like you, who liked to coast and skate and play ball, when he did n't have to work to help his mother. He went as a drummer-boy, and they said that before the year was out, he was the best drummer in his corps. But one night, after a big battle, he was missing, and some of the men went out to look for him with lanterns. They found him lying dead across his

"They felt sure that the boys who came after them would learn from them the lesson of how to do the hard thing if it is the right thing," he said.

drum, with the sticks still fast in his hands. He lies just over the wall there"; and the old man pointed toward the graveyard.

"And there was Larry Owen. He was the color-sergeant, — carried the flag, you know, — and when they were charging up a hill, and a bullet cut the flagstaff in two, Larry caught the colors, and carried them on halfway up the slope. As he fell, he passed the flag to his chum, Joe Woodman, and then Joe carried it. He fell just as his regiment took the hill.

"Of course, not all the boys were killed. A great many of them came back, but some of them were crippled, and all of them had lost four of the best years of their life. They found it hard to catch up with those who stayed at home; so most of them have been poor, and have had to work hard since. But they have never been sorry; they did what was right, and no one is ever sorry who does that.

"I think the only thing that could make them sorry would be the feeling that we had forgotten them, or had never understood what they did and why they did it. They felt sure that we would always remember, and especially that the boys who came after them would learn from them the lesson of how to do the hard thing if it is the right thing.

"That is why I always come over here on Memorial Day. It may not do any good to those boys that lie over there in the grass under the trees, but it does *me* good. I go over there, and say to myself, 'Johnnie Cramer, we

have come again because we have not forgotten; here's something to show that we still keep you in mind. Larry Owen, the country remembers, and sends these flowers. Joe, you fought a good fight, and your name shall not fade.'"

The old man got up slowly, and said, "It will not be long till afternoon, and then you can have your game."

But Roddy had got up, too, the sour look gone from his face, and something of eagerness and of shame glowing there instead.

"I won't play!" he cried. "I don't want any game! Give me some of those flowers, and let me go with you!"

The Scratching on the Door

ALL winter Bobby had been counting the days until spring; for his father had promised him that this year he should go with his big brothers to the sugar-camp back in the hills and help to make the family supply of maple syrup and sugar. And now the time had come, and Bobby was really there in the camp, a snug cabin nestling in a big stretch of woods, with a clear spring and a lively little brook near by. It seemed too good to believe! For three days now he had been there, without going home at all. Someone went out to the farmhouse every day and brought in a great basket of good things to eat; and at night Bobby slept in a little bunk in the corner, on a bed of sweet-smelling balsam boughs.

To people who are not used to the northern hills in March it would not have seemed like spring, for the snow still lay thick in the woods, showing as plainly as the page of a book how and where the rabbits and the partridges got their dinner, and how the foxes followed the little wood-mice along their zigzag pathways, and at last pounced upon them and gobbled them up. In the morning and the evening it was still very cold. Ice formed thick in the spring hole, and the snow went *crunch*, *crunch*, when anyone walked on it; but in the middle of the day the sun shone warm, the crows flew

Bobby had been busy every minute. Sometimes he helped to empty buckets, and sometimes he drove old Buck harnessed to the sleigh that drew the sap to camp.

back and forth, calling loudly to one another; and all about, when it was still, you could hear the drip of the sap as it fell into the buckets.

Bobby had been busy every minute. Sometimes he helped to empty the buckets, sometimes he dipped the scum from the boiling sap in the great evaporating-pan, sometimes he drove old Buck, harnessed to the big sled that drew the sap to camp. All of it was such fun as he had never known before.

But now, on the evening of the third day, he did not feel quite so happy, for he was to be all alone until nearly morning. That afternoon his father had slipped on an ice-covered root and sprained his ankle, and the two older boys, Bobby's brothers, had had to put him on the sled and carry him home. They had told Bobby what to do — that he must not go to sleep, but must sit up to skim the sap and keep the fire going; and they had left a pile of wood, carefully picked, of sticks small enough for him to lift.

"Now," said Edgar, "don't be afraid. There is nothing that will hurt you, and we shall come back as soon as we can."

So Bobby was left all alone in the great woods, miles from any other house.

It was very still. Once a big owl somewhere off in the night called, "Whoo! Whoo! Whoo-whoo, whoo!" But Bobby knew who *he* was, and so was not afraid. And then he heard a fox bark snappishly, as if scolding; but a fox could not hurt, and so that did not frighten

him, either. Then, as he sat there all alone, he thought he should like to make some maple "wax," by cooling thick syrup until it was tough and "chewy." So he hunted about the cabin until he found an empty can that had held baked beans. He washed it out carefully, poured the hot syrup into it, and, opening the door, set the can in the deep snow outside, and went in again to tend the fire. When he had filled the great brick fire-box he sat down to rest a bit. He cannot tell how long he sat there, for he thinks he must have fallen asleep for a minute or two, in spite of what his brother Edgar had said. The first thing he knew, there was a slight sound of crunching on the snow outside, as if someone was trying to walk very carefully, but was scuffing his feet a little. Then came a gentle *foof! foof!* as if something were snuffing at the crack of the door.

Bobby held his breath, but his heart beat so fast that it seemed as if he could hardly breathe. In a little while he heard more crunching and scuffing, and then a noise as if some animal were eating — a kind of *chup! chup!* such as a pig makes when the skimmed milk tastes better than usual.

Bobby was now really scared. What if it were a bear or a bobcat, and should try to get in! He looked round the cabin to see what he could use to fight with. There was the axe, of course, but it was too heavy for him. No, that would not do. Then he saw the long-handled dipper. That might do! He could fill it with boiling sap and throw it into the face of anything that should try to get in.

And then his heart almost stopped beating altogether, for a terrible racket began just outside the door. There were whines and cries as of some animal in pain, and the scratching of claws on the door, and at last two or three thumps against the side of the cabin. Bobby reached for the dipper and filled it from the part of the pan where the sap was boiling most furiously. But just as he lifted it, and stood there, waiting and trembling,

The baby bear had smelled the syrup.

his ear caught another sound — the sweetest he had ever heard.

"Get on there, Buck! Come back into the road! What ails you, anyway?" It was Edgar calling to the horse. The boys were coming!

Bobby threw the door open just as the sled drew up before the cabin. As the boys jumped off and Bobby rushed out, they saw something rolling about in the

snow and whining and clawing the air; and in the clear moonlight they caught a glimpse of something bright and shiny. There, almost at their feet, was the smallest cub bear that Bobby had ever seen. Its head, clear back to its neck, was thrust deep into Bobby's can of maple "wax," and wedged there. It was plain that the baby bear had smelled the syrup and, being as fond of sweets as Bobby himself was, had thrust his head into the can and been caught by the jagged edges of tin round the top. It was not until nearly a week afterwards that they heard how the old she-bear, coaxed from her winter's den for the first time by the warm sun of the day before, had been shot by a wood-chopper. When she did not come back, her hungry baby had started out to look for breakfast, and so had fallen into trouble.

Of course, Bobby was allowed to keep the cub, and great times the two of them had, playing together, until the bear got so big that it was not regarded as safe to keep him any longer. Then Bobby gave him to the "Zoo" in a city not far from his home, and there he is yet, a full-grown bear now, and not at all careful about the way he dresses; for the last time Bobby saw him, the seat of his trousers was all worn bare and rusty-looking. But, as Bobby says, what could you expect? That is the only pair of trousers he ever had.

The Tree that Fought for France

ONE hot September day in the fall of 1915, a little boy lay quietly on his back, looking up through the branches of a great tree that spread its protecting shade above him. He was thinking of the tree, and of all that it had seen, and of what it could tell if only its whispering leaves could talk; for he had heard a part of the story many times, and he wished that he could hear the tree tell the whole of it.

It was his great-grandfather, Philip Le Blanc, and his great-grandmother who had come there first, so long ago that there were no houses and no other people anywhere near. When they saw the tree, which even then was greater than any round it, and when they had drunk of the spring that watered its roots, his great-grandmother had said, "Here let us stay." So they unyoked the oxen from the great wagon and began to make a home in the wilderness. But all that first summer the tree was their real home, for under it they cooked and ate their meals, and under it they slept when the nights were hot.

And by and by, even before they had finished the log cabin on the little knoll to the east, a son was born to them; and him, too, they called Philip; and his father said when he named him, "I have little to give thee, my son; but what God gave to me, that give I also to thee,

Thou shalt have the great tree that has sheltered us in the wilderness, and that was thy first home. It shall be thine forever." And so the tree came very early to be known as "Philip's tree."

The second Philip, who was the little boy's grandfather, had spent his life in making the forests into fields and in planting corn and wheat, and he, too, had a son whom he named Philip; and when he christened him he said, "My son, I have much to give thee, but nothing else so beautiful as the great tree that I had of my father. That, then, shall be your christening gift." And so the tree was still called "Philip's tree"; but this time the Philip that was meant was the little boy's father.

Those things, of course, the little boy could not remember, for they happened long before he was born; but what he did remember was the day when his father had first told him the story of the tree, and at the end had said, "And now, my son, as my grandfather, the first Philip Le Blanc, gave the tree to my father, so I, the third in line, and the third to bear the name, now give it to you, for your very own, to love and cherish as we have loved and cherished it."

All those things the little boy thought of as he lay there and watched the sunlight dotting the leaves with gold. "And it is now *my* tree," he said happily to himself; "my very own."

He thought that he had spoken only to himself, and so he was startled to hear a little rustle in the grass and

a man's voice saying, "Yours, is it, my son? Then you are a lucky boy, for there are few like it now." Then the stranger asked where the little boy's father was, and went over to the house to see him.

Philip saw him go in at the front door, and after a little while come out again, but this time Philip's father was with him. The two of them crossed the dooryard and the road, and came over to where Philip was sitting.

"There!" said Philip's father. "Ask him yourself." And he smiled.

Then the stranger said, "My boy, who owns this tree?"

Philip rose to his feet, for, although he could not tell why, it seemed as if something great was at hand — something in the presence of which it was not fitting to remain seated. So he stood up straight before the man and said, "I own it, sir."

"And will you sell it — to me — for a great deal of money — for a hundred dollars?"

For a moment Philip looked at the man in wonder. "Sell it?" he said. "Sell my tree? No, sir."

Then the stranger turned to Philip's father. "May I tell him the story?" he asked.

"Yes, tell him. Tell him as you told me; for the tree is his, and he shall decide for himself."

And so, as they sat there under the tree, the stranger told the little boy of the great war: of how French men had been killed and French women had been driven from their homes and little French children were starv-

ing. He spoke of the many things that France needed and could get only in this country; and then he rose and, laying his hand on the trunk of the tree, he said, "She needs your tree. She needs it for gunstocks, for it is a black walnut, and so large that it will make hundreds of stocks, and of no other wood can good stocks be made. It is a noble tree. It has been in your family for generations, — I know the story, — and it is like an old and dear friend. But your people and your father's people came from France many years ago to help this country when it was poor, and the land has blessed them and made them rich. Now France needs your help — she needs your tree. Will you sell it to me — to fight for France?"

The little boy looked with wide, startled eyes at his father. "Is it true, father, what the man says?"

"Yes, my son, it is all true."

Philip turned to the stranger. "Then you may have my tree," he said. "But I will not sell it to you, I will give it to France."

"Will you let him do it?" asked the man of Philip's father.

"It is his, and he has done as he wished," said his father, and laid his hand on Philip's head. Then he and the man walked away together.

In a week workmen came with saws and axes and laid the great tree low. Then they brought a little mill and cut the log into blocks and the blocks into slices and the slices into strips, and loaded them on trucks and hauled

them away. And the place where the tree had stood was lonesome and bare. But as Philip thought of the strips of wood that the trucks had hauled away, it seemed to him that every one of them was a tough little brown soldier gone to fight for France.

I do not know who told the story, or how it got across the sea, but a little more than a year afterwards there came to Philip a big wooden box with strange, foreign-looking labels on it; and within was a case of polished walnut that held a wonderfully beautiful rifle. The metal parts were richly engraved, and the stock was of that lovely curly wood that comes only from the part of the tree where the trunk joins the roots; and set into the stock was a plate of gold on which was engraved: —

To

PHILIP LE BLANC

The REPUBLIC OF FRANCE

makes this grateful acknowledgment
of a boy's noble and warm-
hearted gift

Never again will the birds sing in the branches of the old walnut, but in a boy's heart will sing throughout all his life voices sweeter than those of bird or flute, for they are the voices of patriotism and sacrifice and service.

THE END

JAN